



# Leveraging COVID-19 Education and Prevention to Address Hepatitis B among African Communities

(OMH Grant No: CPIMP191175-02-00)

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# Outline

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- African Services Committee (ASC) overview
- ASC's HBV Program and Objectives
- ASC's HBV program prior to COVID-19
- ASC'S HBV program during COVID-19
- Moving Forward
- Acknowledgments





# About African Services Committee

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- African Services Committee is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the health and self-sufficiency of the African community in New York City and beyond by offering health, housing, legal, educational, and social services.





# ASC's HBV Program and Objectives

- Viral hepatitis is endemic to 8-20% of the African continent
- Members of the African immigrant community are often unaware of their viral hepatitis status, lack insurance, and suffer from language barriers and cultural differences with health practitioners
- The goal of ASC's HBV program is to close this gap in access to treatment and education to reduce liver cancer deaths among African immigrants due to viral hepatitis

ALL WELCOME

CONFIDENTIAL

ARE YOU AN  
IMMIGRANT?  
**NEED HELP?**  
NOT SURE  
WHERE TO GO?

LET AFRICAN SERVICES  
COMMITTEE HELP YOU

- Health Screening  
Blood Glucose, TB,  
Blood Pressure, STI,  
HIV, hepatitis B/C
- Legal Services  
Immigration, Family  
Benefits, + more
- Navigation  
to Affordable  
Medical Care
- LGBTQ Support  
+ Job Readiness
- Case Management
- Housing  
Assistance
- Maternal + Infant  
Health Education
- Food Pantry  
+ Nutrition
- English as a  
Second Language
- Mental Health  
Services

French, Spanish, English + many African languages

Free or Low Cost Services

Medical Eligibility Requirements May Apply

Legal Services: A consultation fee with a licensed attorney applies unless eligibility requirements are met.



# ASC's HBV Program Prior to COVID-19

- ASC hosted community awareness and screening events in each borough of New York City with participants receiving Hepatitis B and C education
- ASC conducted outreach to African-born community members using radio ads on African stations, promotional materials, and collaborating with community leaders and faith-based organizations serving the target population
- ASC staff provided culturally competent education on viral Hepatitis in African immigrant languages



# ASC's HBV Program Prior to COVID-19

- Between July 1st, 2019 and March, 2020:
  - ASC hosted 16 total community events in various boroughs across New York City
  - 258 Hepatitis B and C tests were conducted
  - All positive clients were linked to care; susceptible clients were offered the Heplisav 2-dose vaccine at ASC or opted to use their own provider for vaccination; immune clients were notified of their results





# ASC's HBV Program during COVID-19

- ASC closed from March-July 2020 due to the pandemic (5 screening events were cancelled).
  - During this time, ASC staff worked from home by:
    - Following up with clients regarding their health status and referring them to relevant facilities for treatment or resources
    - Encouraging clients to refer contacts to get tested once the office reopened
    - Providing health education over the phone

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**African Services Committee  
on-site Health Testing  
Center is OPEN**

**Free Health Screening:**  
Blood Glucose, TB,  
Blood Pressure, STI,  
HIV, hepatitis B/C

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# ASC's HBV Program during COVID-19

- ASC reopened on July 6th, 2020 with COVID-19 precautions in place: encouraging clients to make appointments for service to predict the flow of people entering the office; mandatory masks; limited staff from each department present; PPE in place (flexi-glass, hand sanitizer, masks, gloves, etc); COVID-19 screening and temperature checks at the front desk.
- Since reopening, off-site testing events have resumed at local mosques, churches, and community health fairs in Harlem, Brooklyn, and the Bronx in collaboration with community leaders and organizations.

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# ASC's HBV Program During COVID-19



- Quarterly webinars on Hepatitis B education and screening
- COVID-19 testing (rapid and PCR)
  - Clients who come to get tested for COVID-19 are encouraged to do HBV testing as well since they are already on-site
  - Vaccine education
    - Encouraging clients to get vaccinated against COVID-19 and HBV



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### Understanding the Basics of Hepatitis B

**Tuesday, October 19th, 2021**  
**6:00 p.m.-6:45 p.m.**

**Register and join us through Zoom:**  
<https://us06web.zoom.us/join/register/tZctd-6hqTMqHN2-wDHPWidex9zHIV73usKo>

**In this webinar, you will learn:**

- What is hepatitis B?
- Symptoms of hepatitis B?
- How hepatitis B is transmitted
- Testing and protection against Hepatitis B



AVEZ-VOUS FAIT LE TEST DE L'HEPATITE B ET C?

AFRICAIN SERVICES OFFRE DES TESTS ET...  
PROFITEZ DE L'OPPORTUNITE DE...  
AVANT LE RETOUR EN FRANCE...  
A L'ISSUE DE VOTRE VOYAGE...  
A L'ISSUE DE VOTRE VOYAGE...

Plus d'informations...  
Lundi - Vendredi, 9h00 - 18h00  
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429 West 127th Street  
New York, NY 10027  
212.222.3882  
www.africanservices.org  
www.africanservices.org

For any questions, please call 212-222-3882 or email [denity@africanservices.org](mailto:denity@africanservices.org)



# Moving Forward

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- ASC will continue to:
  - Provide free HBV education and screening at our office M-F, 9am-5pm with all COVID-19 precautions in place (mandatory masks, temperature checks, minimal wait time, social distancing, and PPE).
  - Follow up with clients regarding their Hepatitis B status to encourage vaccinations, linkage to care, or providing contacts for additional testing
  - Host quarterly webinars on HBV education and screening (beginning again in January 2022)
  - Host outdoor screening events at various locations across all five boroughs in NYC (with social distancing measures in place)



# Acknowledgments

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- Thank you to our partners at Charles B. Wang Community Health Center and the Coalition Against Hepatitis for People of African Origin (CHIPO-NYC) for their continued support and effort
- Religious and community leaders for their support and collaboration
- Hep B United and the Hepatitis B Foundation for continued support