

# KCS Hep B Outreach: Reaching Faith Leaders and Patients in the Korean Community

Paul Lee

Project Coordinator, Grant Specialist  
KCS Public Health & Research Center (PHRC)  
[plee@kcsny.org](mailto:plee@kcsny.org) / (718) 939-6137 ext. 308



**KCS**  
WWW.KCSNY.ORG

THE KOREAN COMMUNITY  
SERVICES OF METROPOLITAN  
NEW YORK, INC.

뉴욕한인봉사센터



**KCS**  
WWW.KCSNY.ORG

THE KOREAN COMMUNITY  
SERVICES OF METROPOLITAN  
NEW YORK, INC.

뉴욕한인봉사센터

Founded in 1973, KCS is the oldest and largest 501(c)(3) non-profit assisting Korean Americans and other immigrant communities across the greater New York City area.

KCS envisions a world where Koreans and other immigrant communities work together to build a better American society for all; one based on empathy, mutual collaboration, and dedicated service. Thus, our mission at KCS is to serve as a bridge for immigrants and other underprivileged communities by assisting them in overcoming any social, economic, or health-related barriers.

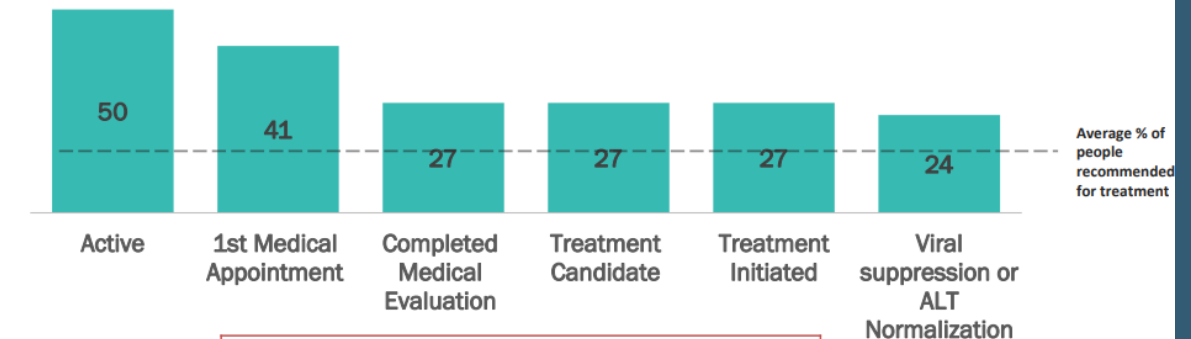
In this capacity, KCS offers a range of professional and culturally competent service programs through our Public Health & Research Center (PHRC), Workforce Development, Senior centers, Adult Daycare center, and Mental Health clinic provided at locations across the NYC metropolitan area including Bergen County, New Jersey.

Furthermore at the PHRC, our programs are prioritized into four areas of focus — disease prevention and education, access to healthcare, healthy living, and advocacy.

# KCS - Check Hep B Patient Navigation Program

- In 2014, the NYC DOHMH launched the Check Hep B Patient Navigation Program to help CBOs identify patients, facilitate linkages-to-care, and provide patient navigation services for individuals from communities with high prevalence of CHB, and who face barriers in accessing care.
- DOHMH estimates ~230,000 people are living with CHB in NYC, with 6,075 newly reported cases in 2018.\*
- KCS, a provider since 2014, has screened over 3,000 community members, and identified/enrolled 180 patients into the program. We identify approximately 25 new cases of CHB annually.

## Korean Community Services July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020



Patient Characteristics	
Country of Birth	4
South Korea	92%
Born Outside of the US	100%
Preferred Languages other than English	3
Korean	94%
Uninsured	60%

Sources:

"Check Hep B Patient Navigation Program – January 2020."

"Working Toward A Hep Free NYC. Hepatitis A, B and C in New York City: 2018 Annual Report".  
New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

\*124,000 people diagnosed with hepatitis B, with an estimated 106,000 individuals who are not diagnosed.

# Outreach Strategies: Reaching Faith Leaders and Congregations

- Working with FBOs are a key part of KCS' intervention/outreach strategy as ~71% of Koreans attend and FBO regularly.
- Many of our screening events are hosted at local FBOs.
- Despite our successes, significant obstacles related to stigma and misconceptions remain.
- Educating church leaders:
- Can help dispel culturally-grounded myths and combat stigma, especially when approached from a spiritual or religious lens.
- Leaders have the ability to influence a “culture shift” among congregation regarding Hep B and illness in general.
- Younger pastors and church leaders are more concerned with issues regarding health and wellness as extensions of spirituality.
- Developed a FBO Toolkit as part of HBU mini-grant to educate and motivate church leaders to take an active role in order to encourage congregants to undergo screenings and begin treatment.

# FBO Hep B Toolkit: Appealing to Belief

## Ending Hepatitis B in New York City



A TOOLKIT FOR KOREAN AMERICAN CHURCH LEADERS

v1.1

### 한인 교회들이 어떻게 B형 간염을 다룰 수 있을까요?

앞 부분에서 언급했던 것처럼, 한인 교회들은 B형 간염의 유행을 끝낼 수 있는데 어떤 조치를 취할 수 있는 특별한 위치에 있으며 중요한 역할을 합니다.

여러분의 교회가 한인들과 심지어는 여러분의 신자들 안에 있을지도 모르는 B형 간염을 관리할 수 있는 몇 가지 절차가 있습니다:

- B형 간염을 검사하는 행사를 준비하여 진행하세요. KCS PHRC(한인봉사센터)가 여러분을 도와드릴 수 있습니다!
- 예를 들어 당신이 먼저 검사 받아 리드하세요. 당신의 신자들이 검진하고 자신들의 상태를 알도록 격려하세요. 그들의 가족과 친구들이 행동을 취하지 않음으로써 받을 수 있는 잠재적인 위험에 대해 설명하세요.
- 한인 사회 속에 있는 B형 간염의 유행에 대한 인식을 높여주세요.
- B형 간염이 어떻게 가능하고 전염되는지에 대한 정확한 정보를 제공하세요.
- 한 사람의 건강에 B형 간염이 주는 영향에 대해 설명하고 그들도 완전히 **평범한 삶을 살 수 있다**고 설명하세요.
- B형 간염이 음식을 함께 먹는 것과 같은 가벼운 접촉으로는 퍼지지 않는다는 것을 강조하세요.
- 낙인에 대한 두려움에 의해 유발되고 있는 감춰져 있는 고통을 강조하며 문화적인 금기에 맞서세요. 우리는 모두 그리스도 전체의 한 부분이라는 것을 강조하세요.
- 병을 얻는 것은 잘못이나 **신의 처벌이 아니며** 부끄러운 것이 아니라는 것을 가르침으로써 그리스도의 연민과 사랑의 메시지를 고취시키세요.

"이와 같이 우리 많은 사람이 그리스도 안에서 한 몸이 되어 서로 지체가 되었느니라."

— 로마서 12:5

"Nevertheless, I will bring health and healing to it; I will heal my people and will let them enjoy abundant peace and security."

— Jeremiah 33:6

More than 240,000 people in NYC are living with Hepatitis B. Many do not know they are infected.

Approximately 20% of Korean American adults who report they are vaccinated against Hep B are actually at risk of infection.\*

There is currently **no cure** for Hep B, but appropriate medical treatment can suppress the virus and keep the patient healthy.

\*Based on serological diagnoses of 973 first-generation, Korean American adults living in the United States who believed they had been successfully vaccinated. (Navarro N., et al. BMC Infect Dis. 2014; doi: 10.1186/1471-2334-14-269).

# FBO Hep B Coalition: Organizing Faith Leaders to Take Action

- With the support of HBU's mini grant 2019, KCS organized and created a faith-based committee.
- This committee and other outreach activities (screenings/education) are organized through existing relationships with various faith-based associations.
- Brought together 8 head pastors of different Korean United Methodist Church congregations in NYC and greater New York area during an annual gathering; a fundraiser "walkathon" at Bear Mountain State Park held last March.
- Faith leaders are often extremely busy, so joining in this gathering was a prime opportunity to create a faith-based committee and educate church leaders and their congregations.



# Outreach Strategies: Community Education and Raising Awareness

- KCS hosted its 3rd annual “Liver Health Forum” in October 2019, inviting liver and Hep B specialists to present and take questions from 150 community members.
- These events help community members to engage with clinical specialists, receive targeted education, and also to make their needs known.
- Based on feedback and past successes with this event, KCS intends to continue hosting our Liver Health Forum, to be held in October 2020.



# Outreach Strategies: Radio PSA

- KCS has also had recent success with several PSA campaigns on local ethnic radio station (K-Radio AM 1660) to deliver a bi-weekly radio spot, broadcast five times day.
- K-Radio AM 1660 has approximately 3,000+ daily listeners across the tristate area, allowing KCS to reach a broader audience.
- Real patient testimony were utilized in the announcements.
- Several dozen individuals from the metropolitan area have reached out regarding screenings or receiving care as a result of the radio PSA.





# Outreach Strategies: Radio PSA



- English Translation:

“I’ve been taking medication to treat my chronic hepatitis B for many years, however, due to issues with my health insurance I wasn’t able to continue my treatment. That is until I learned about KCS’ Hepatitis B program.”

Liver cancer is one of the leading causes of death in the Korean community, and hepatitis B is both prevalent and directly linked to liver cancer among Koreans.

Because there are no special symptoms, hepatitis B is easily overlooked.

Receiving a blood test is the only way to know for certain, and regular check-ups are the only way to monitor the spread of the virus.

“Now I’m thankful. Since joining KCS’ program I have been able to receive regular check ups every six months, including blood tests and ultrasounds even without health insurance coverage.”

Hepatitis B can lead to cirrhosis, liver damage, or liver cancer if not treated.

Receiving regular check ups are a promise for a future healthy life.

If you or a loved one is suffering from hepatitis B, or if you wish to receive a blood screening to check, please contact KCS Public Health & Research Center for consultation to begin receiving treatment as soon as possible.

# Future Outlook and Activities

- Have added two more church leaders / congregations to the New York Hep B faith-based coalition since the first gathering.
- KCS has opened an office in Bergen County, New Jersey to begin expanding our service range and in response to needs of the Korean community there.
- Working to establish a New Jersey faith-based coalition, have recruited two churches so far.
- Seeking to expand our reach to other belief systems including Buddhist temples.
- Will continue hosting our Liver Health Forum and intend to launch a new media campaign.
- In light of funding cuts at state/city level, KCS is committing itself to advocacy work with other Hep Free NYC members, and assisting in the development of a NYC Viral Hepatitis Elimination plan by collecting feedback from community members and patients about their needs.



**KCS**  
WWW.KCSNY.ORG

THE KOREAN COMMUNITY  
SERVICES OF METROPOLITAN  
NEW YORK, INC.

뉴욕한인봉사센터

# Thank you!

## Resources:

- Korean Community Services of Metropolitan New York: [www.kcsny.org](http://www.kcsny.org)
- KCS Hepatitis B – FBO Toolkit (English / Korean):  
<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/asg23geg5xzof6k/AACSQd5IvIUtgUG9XFcFkKZGa?dl=0>
- NYC Check Hep B Patient Navigation Program: <https://hepfree.nyc/check-hep-b-patient-navigation-program/>
- Hep Free NYC: <https://hepfree.nyc/>
- NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene’s 2018 Annual Report on Hepatitis A, B, and C:  
<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/cd/hepatitis-abc-annual-report-2018.pdf>

**If your organization is interested in partnering with KCS for any potential projects, please contact us!**

**(718) 939-6137 / [plee@kcsny.org](mailto:plee@kcsny.org)**