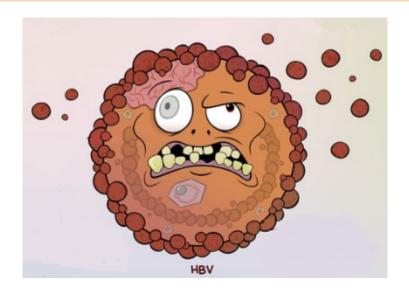
## Hep B Moms Project

A postpartum patient navigation program for women living with hepatitis B



#### Farma Pene & Liz Tang

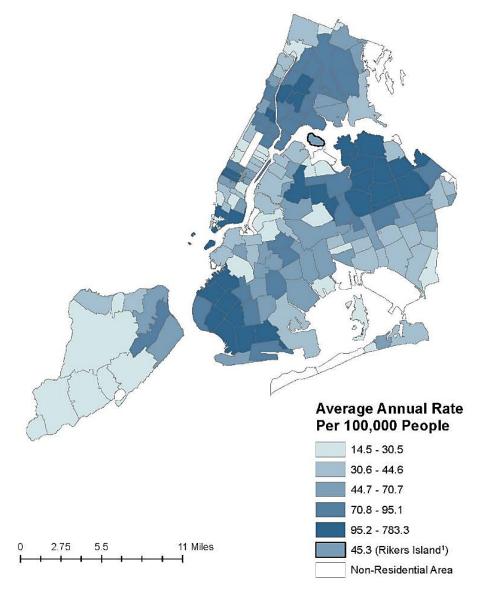
New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Viral Hepatitis Program
September 18th, 2019





## Background

- Over 230,000 New York City (NYC)
   residents are living with chronic Hep B
   infection
- New York State (NYS) law mandates testing all pregnant women and reporting positive results
- 1,256 pregnant women reported with Hep B in 2017





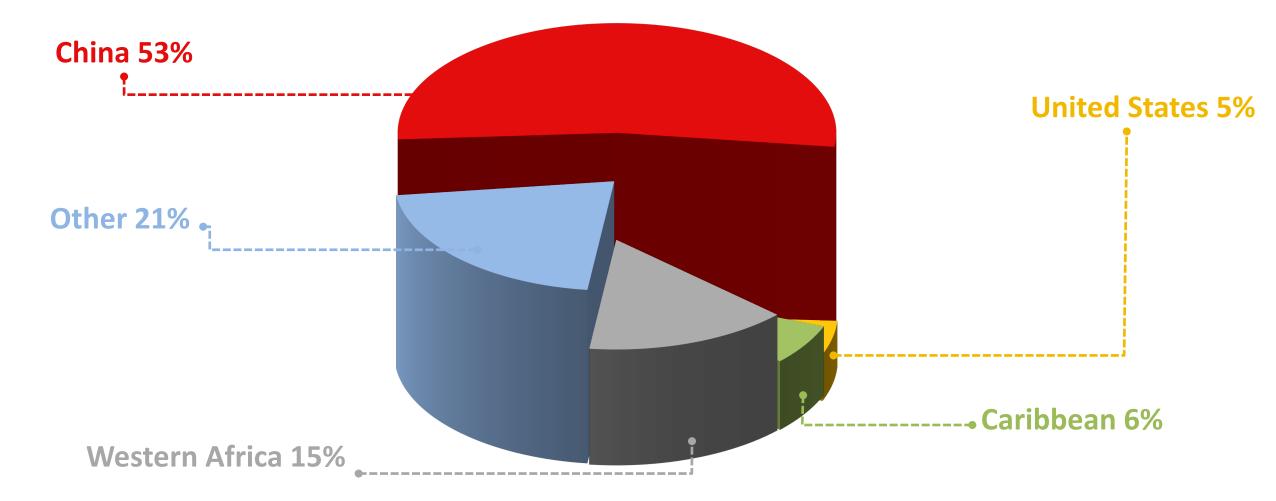
## Why perinatal women?

- Only 1 in 5 pregnant women with Hep B receive appropriate follow up after delivery
- Half of providers do not educate women about hepatitis B or refer to specialty care
- 1 in 4 women with Hep B have flares after delivery





#### Birth Countries of women with hepatitis B who delivered a child in NYC, 2017





## Hep B Moms Patient Navigation Project

- Goal: Increase maternal engagement in Hep B medical care after delivery
- Population: Adult postpartum women in NYC
- Intervention: Telephone patient navigation program
- Research: Required full IRB approval and informed consent from participants
- Duration & Funding Source: 2 years, Gilead Sciences grant
- Staff: 1 full time Chinese-speaking and 1 French- and Wolof-speaking navigators. 2 part-time grad school interns



## Program Workflow and Evaluation

- Navigators receive referrals
- Review patient demographic information
- Review lab results
- Review provider information

- Outreach
- Informed consent
- Assessment
- Culturally appropriate linkage to care
- Health education
- Assistance to overcome barriers
- Reminders
- Follow up

- Did the
   intervention
   increase the
   proportion of
   women who
   received follow-up
   hepatitis B
   monitoring within 6
   months of delivery?
- Increase selfefficacy
- Increase Hep B knowledge
- Decrease stigma
- Improve patientprovider communication
- Enhance referral process
- Increase contact screening and vaccination

Preparation

Intervention

**Evaluation** 

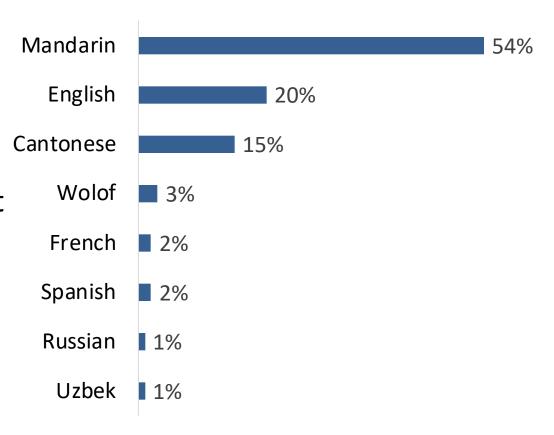
**Impact** 



## Participant Characteristics & Program Outcomes

There were unique barriers faced by Chinese-born versus other participants, encompassing both educational and health care needs

- 417 enrolled, 99% foreign-born
- 23% uninsured/temporary insurance
- 81% of those enrolled for at least 4 months have attended an appointment for Hep B care after delivery
- 5% referred their contacts





## Characteristics of Chinese-speaking participants





Follow-up with PCP at FQHC or private practice



Most patients can make appointments



Have a health insurance representative



Work or travel outside NYC



Communicate by call, text, weChat, email

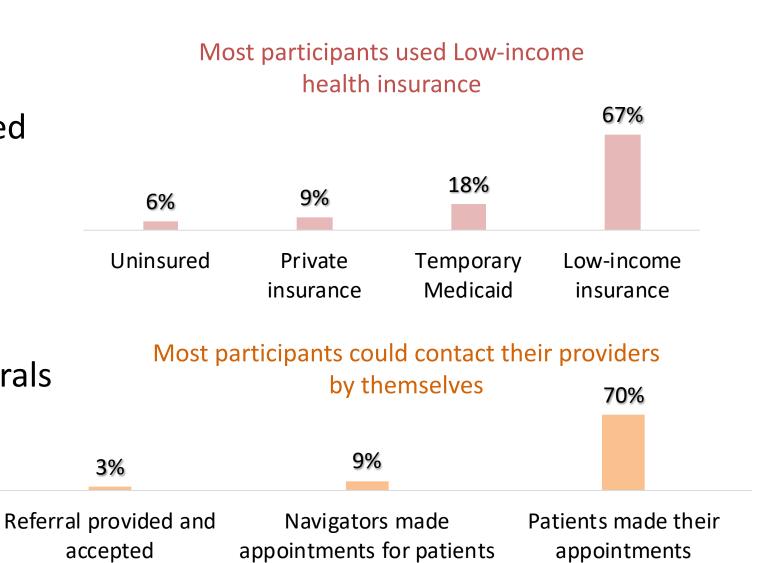


Aware of spouse's Hep B status



# Total Chinese-speaking participants: 272/417

- 78% preferred speaking in Mandarin and 21% preferred speaking in Cantonese
- 3% unable to fill out forms
- 11% needed help to make appointments
- 6% needed additional referrals for health insurance or pharmacy, etc.



## Barriers to care for Chinese-speaking participants

## Schedule Appointment

- Difficult to schedule appointments due to travel/work schedule
- 2. Some private practices only take walk-ins and no next appointment scheduled

Access to care

- Difficult to provide required documents to apply for low-cost medical services
- 2. Misinformation about sliding fee scale
- 3. Copayment/deductible

Hep B Knowledge

- Does not understand the importance of routine monitoring
- 2. Believes that Hep B medication is not safe if taking it long-term or while breastfeeding



# Common concerns & questions of Chinesespeaking participants

Would the baby take the medication at the Side Effects of Long-term same time if I am breastfeeding? Hep B medication For people with immunity, how long does Vaccine and Immunity the immunity last? Routine follow up My viral load is low, do I need to follow up? Diet and Lifestyle Can I use cooking wine? Spread HBV to others Can I breastfeed my baby? Lack of informal support Would it affect my green card application if for child care I get health insurance? Immigration policy changes

## Characteristics of Other Participants (1)





Patients need full appointment scheduling



Mostly uninsured



Experience language access barriers



Low health Literacy

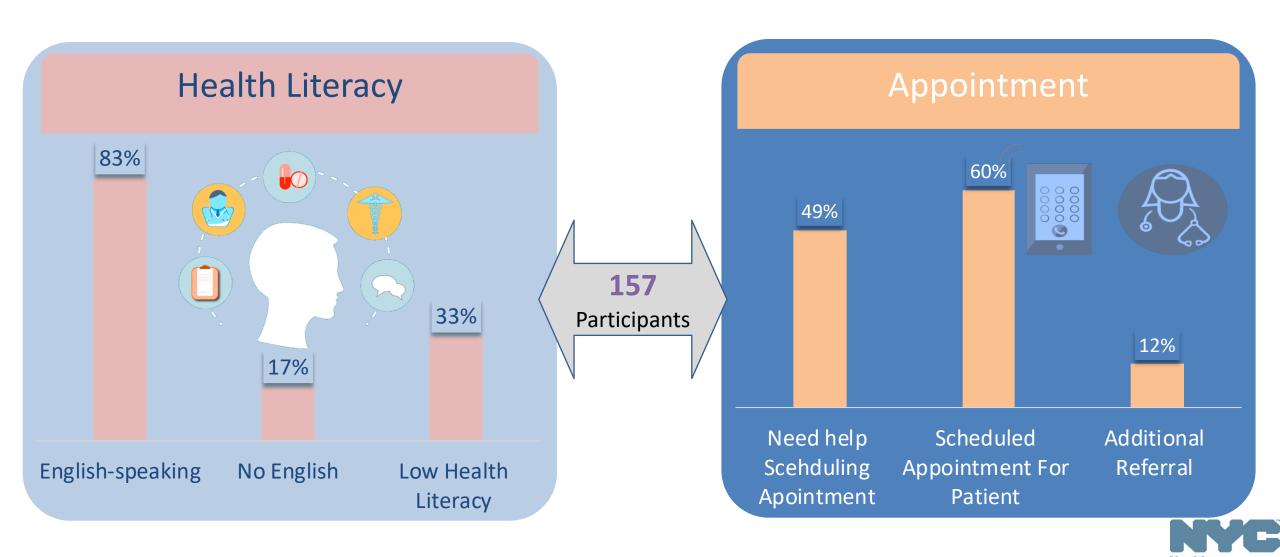


Mostly communicate by phone



Receive most of their care at H+H (public) hospitals and FQHCs

# Characteristics of Other Participants (2)



## Barriers to Care for Other Participants

# Language

- 1. Language services are not available
- Low quality translation from interpreter services
- Difficulties communicating by text
- 4. Can't make appointments

# Access to Care

- 1. Undocumented
- 2. Unaware of low-cost health services
- 3. Difference between temporally insurance and regular insurance

## Hep B Knowledge

- Does not understand the risks of Hep B
- 2. Lack of knowledge of medications and blood tests
- 3. PCP versus specialist



## Common concerns & questions of Other Participants

Will my kids be ok after Being stigmatized by family vaccinations? or partner What is so dangerous about B and where does the virus comes How to get documents to from? provide to hospital for low cost care (sliding fee scale) Is it too late to get vaccinated? Concerned health insurance What can I eat to make sure the virus stays low? will damage green card application As a person living with Hep B, can I work in health care? Concerned that Hep B is causing other health issues Since the virus is low, does it mean it is going away?



## **Lessons Learned**

- Navigation services and health education are important for postpartum women
- Accessing free and low-cost health care is complicated
- Maintaining close relationships with federally-qualified health centers and public hospitals is critical
- A patient's language needs are not always met by interpreter services at hospital or health insurance companies
- Focusing on the person (not the disease) is less stigmatizing
- Patients often have limited Hep B health literacy and need guidance



## Thank you!

### The Hep B Moms Project is supported by the great work of:

Jessie Schwartz & Interns: Jialiang Li & Faiza Nasir

Perinatal Hepatitis B Prevention Program

Julie Lazaroff, Ariba Hashmi & All the Public Health Advisors

Check Hep B Patient Navigation Programs

Umaima Khatun & Nirah Johnson

Check Hep B Patient Navigation Partners and their Patient Navigators

And many others!



