

Successful Citywide Prevention Campaign to be Replicated

CPIC integral to evaluation of campaign's effectiveness; other areas to replicate approach

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The [Cancer Prevention Institute of California \(CPIC\)](#) and three other institutions have released new research findings to demonstrate that the massive collaborative effort known as the San Francisco Hep B Free campaign has increased awareness, testing and vaccination for chronic hepatitis B – a silent killer and the leading cause of liver cancer – in the city's Asian and Pacific Islander community. Asians and Pacific Islanders are the racial/ethnic group at highest risk of chronic hepatitis B.

CPIC Research Scientist [Ellen Chang, Sc.D.](#), played an essential role in the breakthrough study just published in the *Journal of Community Health*. She and colleagues from the San Francisco Department of Public Health, the AsianWeek Foundation, and the Asian Liver Center at Stanford University found that Hep B Free provides communities with a powerful and cost-efficient model to prevent hepatitis B and associated liver cancer in at-risk populations.

Last May, the [New York Times](#) covered the campaign, which started in 2007, for its striking yet controversial advertisements.

"Because of this innovative and inclusive campaign, which pulled together 160 public and private partners across San Francisco, thousands of high-risk individuals were vaccinated, preventing them from ever developing liver cancer due to hepatitis B," said Dr. Chang. "Thousands more were screened for chronic hepatitis B, enabling those who tested positive to be routinely screened for liver cancer to catch the disease early and cure it."

The campaign was the first city-wide effort to combat hepatitis B and the first to focus so broadly on Asian and Pacific Islander health. Partners included the Asian and Pacific Islander community, the health care system, policymakers, public officials, businesses, and the general public.

Dr. Chang and her study collaborators showed an 8% increase in hepatitis B screening tests throughout San Francisco from 2006 (just before the campaign was launched) to 2008 and a 17% increase in tests for immunity from the disease. Community events and fairs designed to increase hepatitis B awareness and prevention reached 200,000 individuals.

Prior to the campaign's launch, 30% of primary health care providers in San Francisco could not correctly identify the screening test for hepatitis B and most underestimated the burden of hepatitis B in Asians and Pacific Islanders. As a result of the educational events and materials distributed, more than half of primary care physicians in San Francisco and all hospitals in the city pledged to screen Asian and Pacific Islander individuals routinely for the disease.

For more about Dr. Chang, the study, and campaign, please visit www.cpic.org/research_news.

About the Cancer Prevention Institute of California

The Cancer Prevention Institute of California (CPIC) is the nation's premier organization dedicated to preventing cancer and to reducing its burden where it cannot yet be prevented. For more information, visit CPIC's official website at www.cpic.org.

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