

## Philadelphia Hepatitis B & Hepatitis C Elimination Plan Community Engagement Executive Summary

The Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH) has begun to build a viral hepatitis elimination plan for Philadelphia with the support and input of subject matter experts, communities, advocates, and people affected by hepatitis B and hepatitis C. *Philadelphia's Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C Elimination Plan* will identify strategies to reduce the number of new hepatitis B and hepatitis C infections, along with hepatitis-related illness and death, by 2030 and will be modified as needed in that time.

The intersectionality of elimination of hepatitis B and hepatitis C with the drug use epidemic, the housing crisis, systemic racism, stigma, and other drivers of health disparities are critical to the strategies in this Plan. A focus on harm reduction, including expanded access to syringe services, an emphasis on cultural competency, and other approaches to addressing these critical barriers to elimination will be included throughout the Plan, though we acknowledge an inability to solve all of these crises in one document. With the *Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C Elimination Plan*, however, Philadelphia will have a trauma-informed, equitable, diversity-driven, culturally competent, harm reduction-oriented guide to eliminating hepatitis B and hepatitis C in Philadelphia.

Hepatitis B and hepatitis C are important health conditions that cause significant reductions in the quality of life, and life expectancy of people who they affect. Nearly 75,000 Philadelphia residents are estimated to be living with either hepatitis B or hepatitis C, yet because both conditions are often asymptomatic, many more people do not know they're infected. Hepatitis B, however, is preventable with vaccination and treatment can improve the long-term impacts of the chronic disease. Hepatitis C may also be chronic but is curable with a short, easy, and often side effect free treatment. Many health disparities impact the individuals and communities affected by hepatitis B and hepatitis C, and intentional and persistent work must be done to remove the systemic barriers to health equity to eliminate these conditions in Philadelphia.

*Philadelphia's Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C Elimination Plan* is based on guidance from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' *Viral Hepatitis National Strategic Plan: A Roadmap to Elimination in the U.S., 2021 – 2025* and in alignment with the Pennsylvania Department of Health's *Pennsylvania Viral Hepatitis Elimination Plan*, but takes Philadelphia's unique characteristics and resources into account. The strategies and activities outlined will be recommendations for PDPH and the City of Philadelphia, as well as for stakeholders throughout the city.

Many individuals and organizations have been working towards hepatitis B and hepatitis C elimination in Philadelphia for years and even decades, and this Plan builds on their foundational work. PDPH is committed to bringing together the network of champions and communities to coordinate continued hepatitis B and hepatitis C elimination efforts throughout Philadelphia. The creation of this *Philadelphia Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C Elimination Plan* is a first step in this journey together.

If you are interested in providing feedback at this time, please email us at [HEP-DDC@phila.gov](mailto:HEP-DDC@phila.gov) or use this form: <https://bit.ly/215EliminatesHep>