

Hepatitis Network for Education and Testing (HepNET) Learning Communities for Strengthening Partnerships for People of Color: Black-Led Viral Hepatitis and Harm Reduction

Overview and Application Form

Purpose and Learning Community Description

Purpose

NASTAD, in partnership with the National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable (NVHR) and National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), is seeking black harm reductionists working within Black-led hepatitis and harm reduction settings.

The purpose of the Hepatitis Network for Education and Testing (HepNET) Learning Communities for Strengthening Partnerships for People of Color: Black-Led Viral Hepatitis and Harm Reduction is to improve viral hepatitis outcomes for Black people who use drugs by increasing support and building the capacity of the workforce currently engaged in efforts that center this population. Additionally, the Learning Community (LC) will facilitate partnerships between community-based harm reduction organizations and governmental public health (health departments).

Learning Community Description

NASTAD and its partners will select up to 20 participants who currently serve predominantly Black/African American people who use drugs and who have experience delivering drug user health and/or other harm reduction support to join the LC.

The selected participants will convene monthly for ninety (90) minutes over a six (6) month period, tentatively starting in April 2025. The LC sessions will take place during standard working hours (scheduled between 1 pm and 5 pm ET) and will include facilitated discussions and activities. Participants are anticipated to spend an additional one to two (1-2) hours per month outside of LC sessions to check-in with program staff, fellow participants, and/or to join debrief sessions.

Compensation

Applicants selected to join the LC will receive *\$40/hour* for participation in the monthly sessions and pre-approved activities outside of LC sessions.

Application Instructions

Applications for the Hepatitis Network for Education and Testing (HepNET) Learning Communities for Strengthening Partnerships for People of Color: Black-Led Viral Hepatitis and Harm Reduction are due by **February 7, 2025, at 11:59 PM PT**. Applications must be submitted via Click Up [Here](#).

For more information, visit www.nastad.org/hepnet. Please send any questions about this process to Phillip Rideoutt (NASTAD) at prideoutt@nastad.org or (202) 897-0037.

HepNET Learning Community 2.0 Q&A Webinar

Please [Register Here](#) for the HepNET Learning Community 2.0 Q&A Webinar **on Thursday, January 16, 2025 at 3:00 PM ET** and/or **Wednesday, January 22, 2025 at 3:00 PM ET**. The webinar will feature an overview of HepNET and its Learning Communities, including their purpose, structure, participant roles, and the application process for individuals interested in joining the LC 2.0.

Project Background

The prevalence of viral hepatitis among people who use drugs (PWUD) is significant and a pressing concern, given its disparate impact on their overall health outcomes. The rate of acute hepatitis B among non-Hispanic Black persons increased by 11.1% during 2021–2022 and was 1.7 times as high as the rate among non-Hispanic White persons. The rates of reported hepatitis C-related deaths among non-Hispanic Black persons were 3.3 times and 1.7 times as high as the rate among non-Hispanic White persons. Among risk behaviors and exposures identified for reported cases of acute HCV infection in 2022, injection drug use was most commonly reported.* The multitude of health conditions faced by PWUD has highlighted both the urgency of strengthening collaborations grounded in harm reduction and direct involvement of PWUD, as well as the pervasive role of social determinants of health in driving inequities. Therefore, the focus of this Learning Community 2.0 (LC 2.0) will be education-based training to support delivery of trauma-informed and structurally-responsive strategies needed to address viral hepatitis among Black PWUD.

These sessions will be led through outreach to and partnerships with Black community leaders/community-based organizations, in service of Black people who use drugs (PWUD).

Sessions will include a focus on intersectional identity and the multiple ways PWUD are marginalized based on their drug use, race, age, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other identity markers.

LC 2.0 will take place from April and September of 2025. Additionally, HepNET staff and trainers will conduct follow-up consultations with participants to learn about how participants have applied lessons learned from the LC to support their work with Black PWUD, including efforts to address the impact of viral hepatitis on your patients, clients, and/or community members. Participants must commit to the full six months in order to join the LC 2.0.

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Viral Hepatitis Surveillance Report – United States, 2022. <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/statistics/2022surveillance/index.htm> Published April 2024. Accessed.

Benefits & Outcomes for LC 2.0 Participants

- Expanded capacity to advance health equity in viral hepatitis care for Black communities, by engaging with HepNET subject matter experts (SMEs) in viral hepatitis prevention and care for PWUD, including the perspective of lived and living expertise.
- Direct technical assistance from the HepNET Partner Team that supports improved health of PWUD and priority populations through greater hepatitis awareness, testing, and linkage to care.
- Technical assistance, consultation, and feedback from Leading with Lived Experience Consultants (individuals living with or who have lived with viral hepatitis and/or people who have in the past or currently use drugs and who trained facilitators).
- Develop a tailored roadmap specific to their organization, designed to enhance program improvement or capacity-building efforts. This roadmap will focus on improving viral hepatitis outcomes for Black people who use drugs, providing a clear and actionable strategy to address the needs of this priority population.
- Opportunities to network with Black and other leaders in harm reduction and viral hepatitis elimination as well as build lasting relationships with peers and colleagues across the nation in harm reduction, health department viral hepatitis prevention and surveillance, programs, NASTAD leadership and staff, and others.

Review and Selection Process

The HepNET Team intends to follow the review and selection timeline below:

- February 7, 2025, 11:59 pm PT: Deadline for application submission via Click Up
- February 28, 2025: Final selection, notification

Proposals will be reviewed through the following process:

- Each application will be reviewed and scored by multiple reviewers using a standardized rubric that evaluates the extent to which applicants meet selection criteria.
- Reviewers will meet to discuss scores and identify finalists.
- Dependent upon volume of high-quality applications, project staff may hold virtual interviews with finalists.
- Project staff will make final selections based on application materials, virtual interview (if applicable), and overall demonstration of ability and readiness to carry out project deliverables.

About NASTAD

NASTAD is a leading non-partisan non-profit association that represents public health officials who administer HIV and hepatitis programs in the U.S. NASTAD work to advance the health and dignity of people living with and impacted by HIV/AIDS, viral hepatitis, and intersecting epidemics by strengthening governmental public health through advocacy, capacity building, and social justice.

Each of NASTAD's seven programmatic teams—Health Care Access, Health Systems Integration, Policy & Legislative Affairs, Hepatitis, Prevention, Health Equity, and Drug User Health—interpret and influence

policies, conduct trainings, offer technical assistance (TA), and provide advocacy mobilization for U.S. health departments to improve health outcomes for people living with HIV and hepatitis.

Health Equity and Anti-Racism Statement

The HepNET Team recognizes racism and the impact of structural oppression on viral hepatitis and co-occurring epidemics as a public health crisis. Without intentional and conscious work against racism to address intersecting health inequities, we contribute to and perpetuate the systems that create and sustain these injustices. Racial justice, equity, anti-racism and anti-white supremacy culture are essential to the success of our work, and we prioritize individuals and organizations that demonstrate these values.

This application form is due by January 31, 2025 at 11:59 PT.

A limited number of participants will be selected. Participants will be compensated for their time at \$40/hr.

Application Information:

Name (First)

Name (Last)

Pronouns (optional)

Email

Street Address/Postal Code/City/State (optional)

Phone Number (optional)

Organization Name

Organizational Affiliation (if any)

Town/City where your organization is based

Which of the following best describes your organization? (Choose all that apply)

AIDS Services Organization

Behavioral Health Clinic or Substance Use Treatment Program

Community-Based Organization

Community Hospital

Federally Qualified Health Center

IHS, Tribal or Urban Indian Health Center

Syringe Services Program

Other

Do Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) comprise at least 50% of the clients served by your organizations? [Answers: Yes, No, I don't know]

Application Narrative

Please answer the following questions about your organization from a racial justice and health equity perspective, with a focus on priority populations disproportionately impacted by Hepatitis B and C and people who use drugs in *1200 words maximum*. Note: These responses will only be reviewed by the HepNET team and will be kept confidential.

1. Describe the type of organization or setting you currently work in (e.g., community-based organization, health department, harm reduction program, advocacy group). Additionally, provide a brief overview of the primary population(s) your organization serves, including any specific focus on people who use drugs or other priority groups. (word limit: 300 words max)
2. Describe your experience in providing viral hepatitis prevention and care related services for people who inject drugs. Please include details about the current viral hepatitis and harm reduction services offered by your organization. (word limit: 300 words max)
3. What is one key viral hepatitis or harm reduction issue you would like to address to improve health outcomes for Black PWUD through your participation in the LC 2.0? (word limit: 300 words max)
4. Identify up to two specific goals you hope to achieve by participating in this Learning Community. (word limit: 300 words max)

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