



NYC HEP C PEER NAVIGATION PROGRAM 2015-2016 FINAL REPORT

Background

- 146,500 people are infected with hepatitis C (Hep C) in New York City (NYC).
- Forty percent are unaware of their infection and only 18% have been cured.
- Injection drug use is the leading risk factor for Hep C infection.
- Treating and curing Hep C reduces the risk of liver disease, cancer and premature death, and prevents transmission of the virus.
- People with Hep C face strong barriers to accessing Hep C care and treatment. Barriers include drug use, homelessness, psychiatric conditions and insurance restrictions on medication coverage.
- Peer navigation helps hard-to-reach people at risk for or living with Hep C overcome barriers to care and treatment, and prevent (re)infection.

Program Description

The goal of the NYC Hep C Peer Navigation Program is to prevent new Hep C infections and navigate people at risk for Hep C through testing and medical care. The program is administered by the New York City Health Department and training and technical assistance is provided by Harm Reduction Coalition.

In Fiscal Year 2016 (FY2016), New York City Council allocated \$337,504* to fund peer navigators at 15 Injection Drug User Health Alliance syringe exchange programs to provide:

- Outreach to people at risk for Hep C
- Hep C health coaching
- Hep C prevention services
- Referrals to supportive services
- Navigation through complete Hep C testing
- Linkage to and retention in Hep C medical care

**Including funding for training and technical assistance by Harm Reduction Coalition*

Program Outcomes

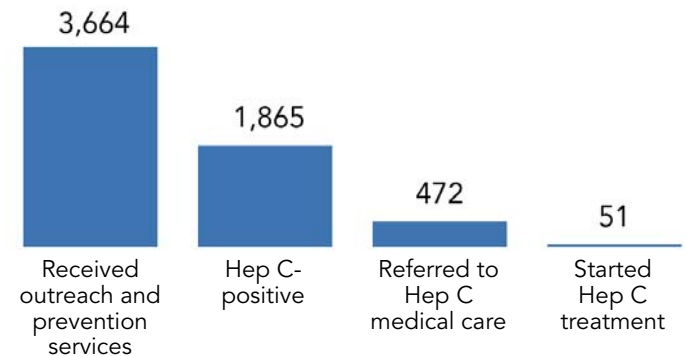
From July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2016:

3,664 people living with or at risk for Hep C were enrolled and received Hep C health coaching and prevention services.

2,078 Hep C tests were completed.

1,865 patients reported Hep C infection or had a positive Hep C test result.

472 patients were referred to Hep C medical care and **51** started Hep C treatment.



Patient Characteristics

All patients had a history of drug use; most patients were active users.

73% were Black or Latino.

48% did not know their Hep C status at intake.

36% were born between 1945-1965; **18%** were born after 1985.

3.5% were transgender.

Peer navigators reported the following barriers to Hep C care or treatment:

- Provider stigma against people who use drugs
- Lack of insurance coverage or insurance restrictions on medication coverage
- Unmanaged:
 - Drug use
 - Alcohol use
 - Psychiatric conditions



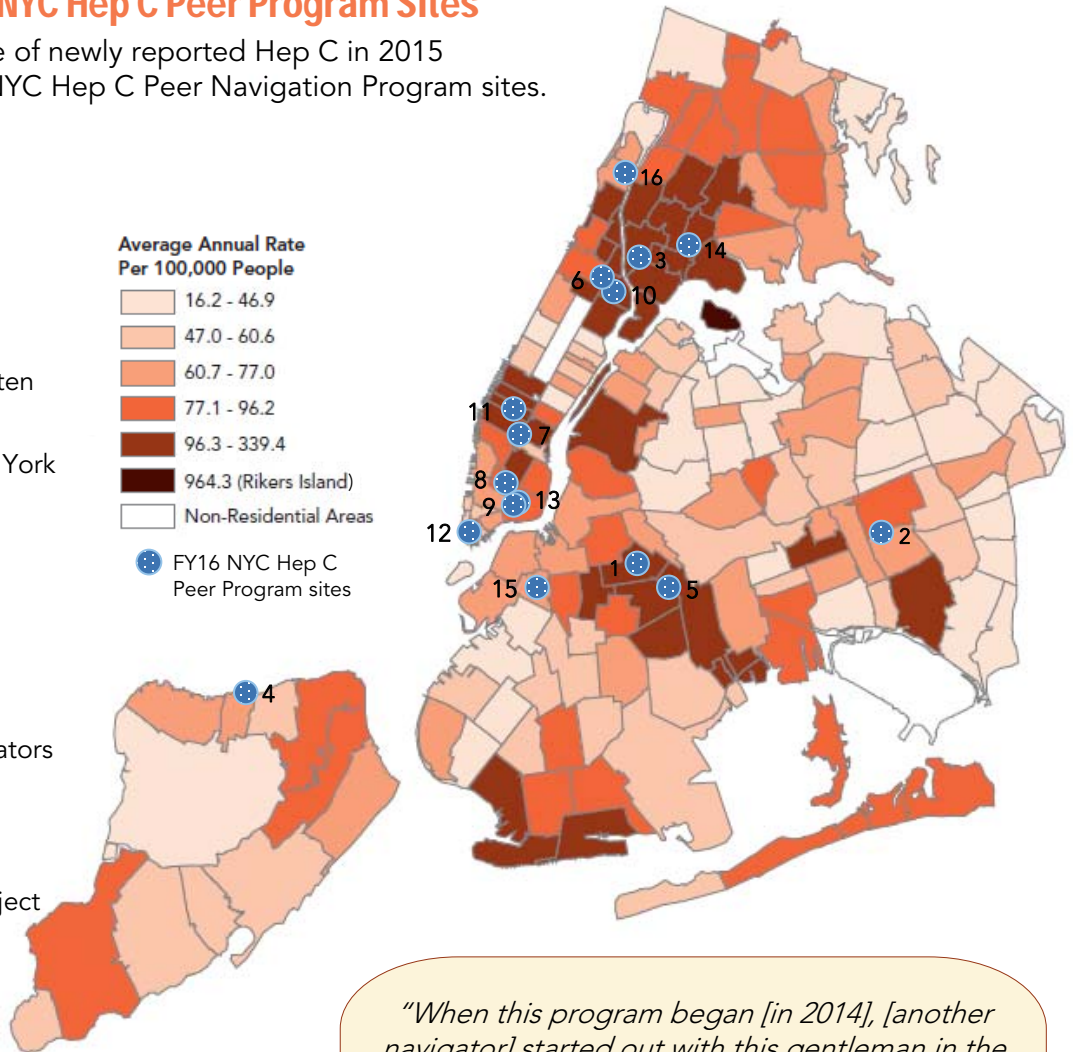
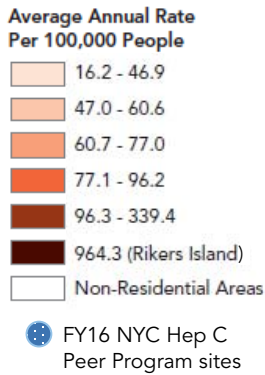
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Hep C in New York City and NYC Hep C Peer Program Sites

The following map shows the rate of newly reported Hep C in 2015 by ZIP code and the location of NYC Hep C Peer Navigation Program sites.

Program Sites

1. After Hours Project
2. AIDS Center of Queens County
3. BOOM!Health
4. Community Health Action of Staten Island
5. Family Services Network of New York
6. Harlem United FROST'D
7. Harm Reduction Coalition
8. Housing Works Crosby Street
9. Lower East Side Harm Reduction Center
10. New York Harm Reduction Educators
11. Positive Health Project
12. Praxis Housing Initiatives, Inc.
13. Safe Horizon Streetwork LES Project
14. St. Ann's Corner of Harm Reduction
15. VOCAL-NY
16. Washington Heights CORNER Project



"A true lesson from this program is accepting people where they are. If you are homeless, Hep C can be the least of your priorities. I had to rethink how I approached people."

– NYC Hep C peer navigator

"When this program began [in 2014], [another navigator] started out with this gentleman in the SRO. He was resistant to everything [and] he was still smoking crack. I took over the site and picked up where [the navigator] left off with this individual. Today he is in HIV care, cleared [of] Hep C and has his own apartment (because he's been living in SROs ever since he's been ill). He has a job [and is] going back to school."

– NYC Hep C peer navigator

"The trust that people have in me is major; it's awesome."

– NYC Hep C peer navigator