


# VIRAL HEPATITIS PREVENTION INITIATIVE ADVOCACY UPDATE

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Outreach Coordinator
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# NYC COUNCIL EDUCATIONAL BRIEFING ON VIRAL HEPATITIS IN NYC

- The NYC Council Educational Briefing on Viral Hepatitis in NYC was held on February 26, 2026, at 250 Broadway in Manhattan.
- The briefing was organized by the Hep Free NYC Advocacy Leadership Committee and sponsored by NYC Council Member and Health Committee Chair Lynn Schulman.
- The NYC Health Department presented preliminary hepatitis B and C surveillance data from 2024, and community partners provided an overview of the NYC Council's Viral Hepatitis Prevention Initiative (VHI) programs and the community budget request.

# BRIEFING SUMMARY & PHOTOS

More than 43 New York City Council Members and their staff and provider and community partners attended the briefing, including Council Members Lynn Schulman & Tiffany Cabán, and staff representing Council Members Ossé, Krishnan, Lee, Maloney, & staff from the office of Council Speaker Menin.

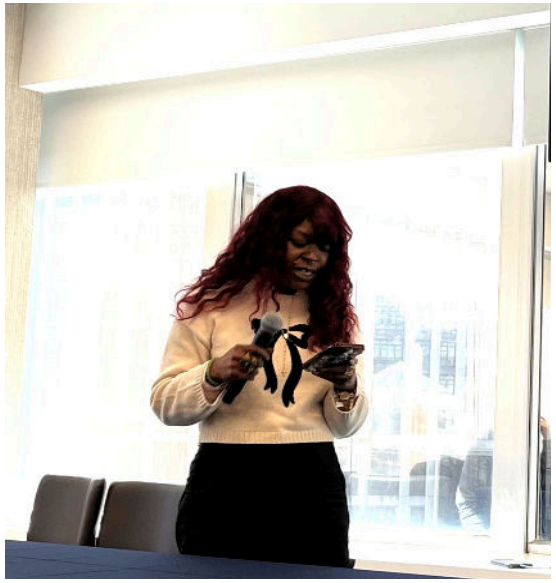



Photo: Council Member & Health Committee Chair Lynn Schulman & NYC Council Candidate Carl Wilson & community partners.

# BRIEFING SUMMARY & PHOTOS




Robert Desrouleaux, Assistant Program Director, Hepatitis C Mentor and Support Group (HCSMG), emceed the briefing and presented on the community budget request.



Jeannine Garriga, Outreach Coordinator, HCMSG, presented a history and overview on the NYC Council Viral Hepatitis Prevention Initiative.

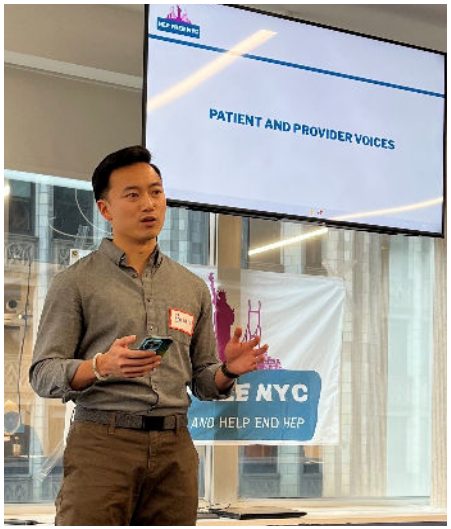


Erin Swepston, FNP, AAHIVS, Clinical Advisor and Director of the Viral Hepatitis Program at the NYC Health Department, presented on 2024 hepatitis B and C surveillance data for NYC.

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# BRIEFING SUMMARY & PHOTOS





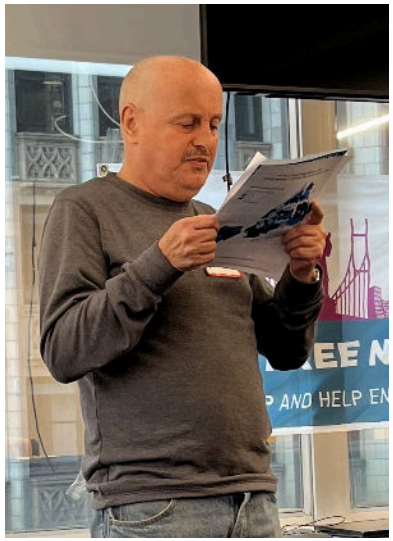



Julie Yoshimachi, DNP, Director of the Hepatitis B Program, Charles B. Wang Community Health Center, Binh Ly, Patient Advocate, Hepatitis B Foundation, and Fatima Omarufilo, Patient Navigator, Montefiore Starfish Program, spoke from the patient and provider perspective about hepatitis B in NYC.

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# BRIEFING SUMMARY & PHOTOS








Helen Adams, PA-C, Mount Sinai Institute for Liver Medicine, and Peter Rodriguez, Patient Advocate, BOOM! Health, spoke from the patient and provider perspective about hepatitis C in NYC. Ronni Marks, Executive Director at HCMSG, gave closing remarks.

# COMMUNITY ASK

In FY27, the organizations in the Viral Hepatitis Prevention Initiative are seeking continued funding of $2.24 million, plus an additional investment of $2.76 million, for a total minimum investment of:



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# WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Did you attend the NYC Council briefing?
If so, what was your key takeaway?

What are they key messages that we want
NYC Council to understand about hepatitis B and C?

# KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM BRIEFING

**Action Step: Call and setup a meeting with your NYC Council Member!**

Most Council Members and their staffers do **not** know enough about hepatitis B and C and are **not** aware of the request to increase VHI funding.

- To schedule meetings with your NYC Council Member:
  - Look up your NYC Council district: https://council.nyc.gov/districts/
  - Educate NYC Council Members and staff on hepatitis B and/or C
  - Provide educational materials and the one-pager request for increase in VHI funding
  - Build a relationship with NYC Council Members and staff

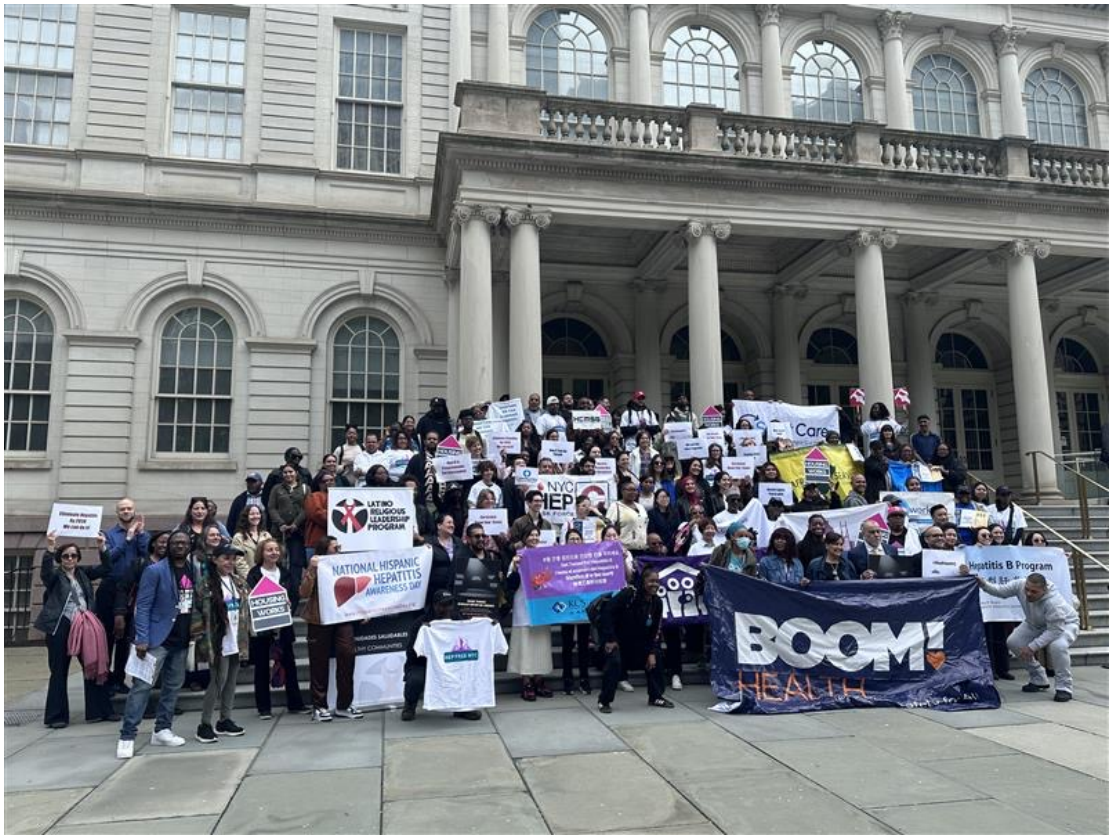
# UPCOMING NYC COUNCIL HEALTH COMMITTEE HEARING

**Action Step: Testify at the NYC Council Health Committee Hearing!**

The NYC Council Health Committee Hearing on the Mayor's Preliminary Budget for Fiscal Year 2027 is on Thursday, March 19, 2026, at 9:30AM, with public testimony at 2:30PM.

- The upcoming Health Committee hearing is a great way to engage with NYC Council Members
- Provide oral or written testimony and share the work of your organization and ask for continued support and increased funding
- Find your NYC Council Member here

# STAY TUNED FOR HEPATITIS AWARENESS MONTH ACTIVITIES



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# QUESTIONS?

**Viral Hepatitis Advocacy Leadership Team:**

- Check Hep C: Kenia Liriano, Community Health Action of Staten Island
- Check Hep B: Eunice Han, Korean Community Services, Julie Yoko Yoshimachi, Charles B. Wang Community Health Center
- Hep C Peer: Jose Martinez, National Harm Reduction Coalition
- Training: Joy Cambe, Empire Liver Foundation; Mike Selick, National Harm Reduction Coalition; Robert Desrouleaux, Hepatitis C Mentor and Support Group, Jeannine Garriga, Hepatitis C Mentor and Support Group
- Advocacy Committee Lead: Meg Chappell, Empire Liver Foundation
- Advisors: Ronni Marks, Hepatitis C Mentor and Support Group, Anthony Feliciano, Housing Works, Ellie Goldfarb, Housing Works, Lawrence Norman BSFHC, Alex Son, BSFHC, Shanda Kearse, CHASI