



# *Working with Clinicians Serving Mobile and Immigrant Populations*



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**HepTalk:** Patients as the Co-Authors of Their  
Hepatitis Prevention Plan



## *HepTalk: Patients as the Co-Authors of Their Hepatitis Prevention Plan*

- **Baseline Clinic Visits to 27 Health centers and health departments**
- **The HepTalk Project helps clinicians negotiate difficult moments in risk assessments so that dialogue takes place about risk and prevention of Hepatitis A, B and C**
- **Development of intervention based on site visit data employing SPI**
- **Evaluation of intervention**



## Definition of a Standardized Patient Instructor

"An SP is a person trained to portray a patient scenario, or an actual patient using their own history and physical exam findings, for the instruction, assessment, or practice of communication and/or examining skills of a health care provider. In the health and medical sciences, SPs are used to provide a safe and supportive environment conducive for learning or for standardized assessment. SPs can serve as practice models, or participate in sophisticated assessment and feedback of one's abilities or services.

*From Gayle Gliva-McConvey, BA Director, Theresa A. Thomas Professional Skills Center Eastern Virginia Medical School Chair, Standards of Practice Committee*

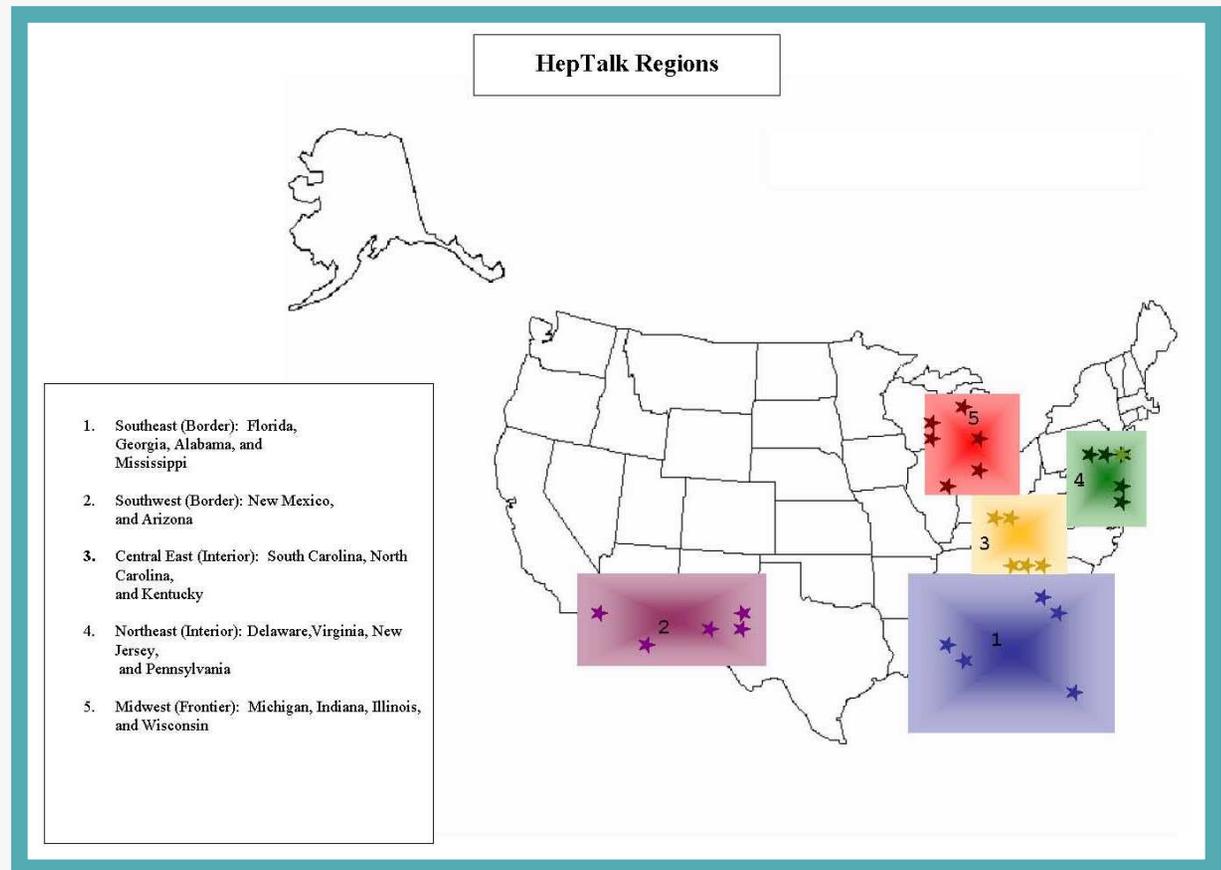
" In performing the simulation, the SP presents the gestalt of the patient being simulated; not just the history, but the body language, the physical findings, and the emotional and personality characteristics as well."

*From HS Barrows Simulated (Standardized) Patients and Other Human Simulations, 1987*



# *HepTalk Regions and Sites*

Randomly  
selected pairs of  
HD and HC sites  
in five areas  
experiencing  
changes in  
migration patterns



*So what do our baseline findings  
mean for primary care providers?*

Focus on Hepatitis Screening,  
Immunization and Testing for Mobile  
Populations and Immigrants from  
Mexico, Central and South America, and  
the Caribbean

# MCN Position Paper

## "Hepatitis Screening, Immunization and Testing for Mobile Populations and Immigrants from Latin America and the Caribbean"

- Released in May 2005.
- Clarifies standard hepatitis screening and vaccination recommendations for these populations.

### Hepatitis Screening, Immunization and Testing for Mobile Populations and Immigrants from Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean

Migrant Clinicians Network, Inc.  
Position Paper  
May 2005

The mission of the Migrant Clinicians Network (MCN) is to provide access to high quality, culturally relevant, and population specific information and tools as an essential part of improving quality of care for farmworkers and other underserved mobile populations.<sup>1</sup> Communicable disease prevention guidelines are often not specific to migrant and immigrant populations. MCN offers these guidelines on hepatitis prevention to supplement standard guidelines<sup>2</sup> in order to suggest a best practice approach to protecting mobile clients in the U.S. from viral hepatitis.

#### Hepatitis Screening

MCN recommends that all primary care and public health clinics include questions about hepatitis risks, and history of liver disease and immunization as part of standard medical assessment (whether asked in written or oral format). MCN recommends that clinics ask these questions of all new clients and update this information at least annually. Specific risk question content is given below. Many clients who move for work purposes are young men. **Because young low-income men tend to present in clinics only with acute illness or injury, MCN recommends that, if the client's condition permits, young men in particular be screened for hepatitis risk factors at any visit, even if they are presenting with unrelated illness or injury.**



Photo © Carmen Rothoff 2000

#### Hepatitis A

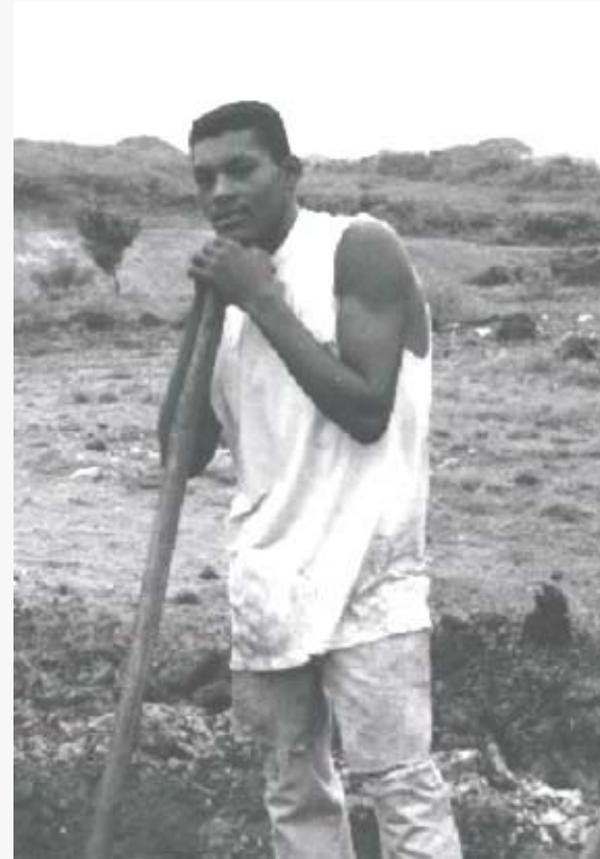
Hepatitis A is transmitted via a fecal-oral route. Though not chronic, hepatitis A can cause serious illness and loss of work time as well as being a more serious health risk to people with chronic liver disease and weakened immune systems. Adults are more likely to show symptoms of illness (jaundice, fatigue, abdominal pain, loss of appetite, nausea, diarrhea, fever) than children.

Mobile working poor persons may be at increased risk for hepatitis A due to lack of access to appropriate water and sanitation facilities while traveling, and substandard housing situations. In addition, hepatitis A is endemic to Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean<sup>3</sup>, and history of exposure is much more common in those countries than in the U.S.

<sup>1</sup> MCN produced this position paper in conjunction with Community Health Education Concepts (CHEC): <http://www.healthletter.com>. This paper was inspired by work done on HepTalk, a hepatitis prevention project with health centers and health department clinics serving migrant and immigrant populations. For more information about the HepTalk project and other MCN hepatitis initiatives, see *Clinical Excellence* on the MCN website: <http://www.migrantclinician.org/excellence/hepatitis>.

# *Hepatitis Screening*

Because young low-income men tend to present in clinics only with acute illness or injury, MCN recommends that, if the client's condition permits, young men in particular be screened for hepatitis risk factors at any visit, even if they are presenting with unrelated illness or injury.



# *MCN Position Paper*

## Highlights for Migrant/Immigrants:

- **Hepatitis A:**  
immunization not necessary for adults and adolescent immigrants from high incidence countries (including Mexico); children born in US traveling to those countries should be immunized before going





# *Hepatitis A Recommendations*

MCN recommends that clinicians that serve migrants and other mobile underserved assume that adolescents and adults who spent significant portions of their lives in Mexico, Central or South America or the Caribbean have been exposed and developed immunity to hepatitis A. These adults should not be tested or immunized for Hepatitis A even if they are traveling to Mexico, Central or South America unless they meet other standard Hepatitis A risk factors.



## *Hep A continued*

With the new recommendation coming out calling for vaccination of children at 12 months, MCN recommends that migrant children between the ages of 24 months and 10 years whose families are expected to move frequently for work be vaccinated against hepatitis A.

## *MCN Position Paper*

### Highlights for Migrant/Immigrants:

- **Hepatitis B:** young single men and adolescents traveling alone, a common situation with migrants--ask about hepatitis B immunization status and do thorough sexual history when they do present at clinics.



# *Hep B Recommendations*

MCN recommends that clinicians consider acceleration of the second dose of hepatitis B vaccine in adults for whom the vaccine is indicated who will be migrating and leaving the care of the clinic

## *Hep B continued*

MCN recommends that mobile prenatal clients lacking complete records from previous prenatal visits indicating hepatitis B screening be tested for hepatitis B.

## *Hep B continued*

- MCN recommends that all adults be vaccinated against hepatitis B, especially adolescents and young adults under 30.
- MCN recommends that persons born in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic and Haiti be tested for hepatitis B.

# *MCN Position Paper*

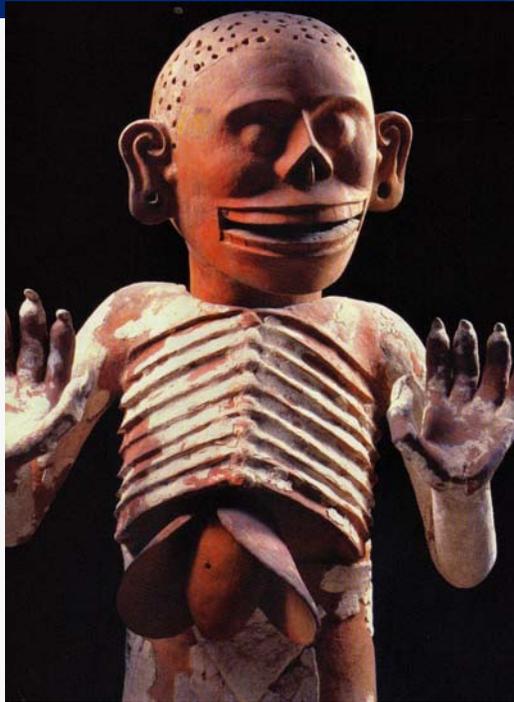
## Highlights for Migrant/Immigrants:

- **Hepatitis C:** Common concern for clinicians, ask about therapeutic self- or lay injection practices (vitamins, birth control, antibiotics, etc.)



# *Hep C Recommendations*

Despite the fact that there is a significant void in treatment of Hep C for indigent individuals in most rural areas evaluated; MCN recommends that all persons for whom standard (CDC) recommendations indicate testing—be tested if financially feasible.



Mictlantecuhtli, Aztec god of the dead.  
Aztecs believed that the liver,  
hanging pendulously from his  
stomach, was the seat of the spirit.  
Photograph by Michael Zabé and  
Enrique Macias, from *The  
Smithsonian Magazine* January  
2005

# Questions?

[migrantclinician.org](http://migrantclinician.org/excellence/hepatitis)  
[/excellence/hepatitis](http://migrantclinician.org/excellence/hepatitis)  
[/excellence/immunizations](http://migrantclinician.org/excellence/immunizations)