



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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San Francisco Health Center Receives National Hepatitis B Champion Award

Washington, D.C., June 21, 2013 – North East Medical Services (NEMS) of San Francisco, CA was among a select group of recipients presented with Hep B United's inaugural *Hep B United Champion* awards, which recognizes extraordinary leadership and commitment in addressing hepatitis B in high-risk Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) populations.

Hep B United issued the first-ever *Champion* awards during an [event](#) last week at which a multilingual hepatitis B testing campaign for AAPIs was announced. NEMS was recognized for its efforts to improve hepatitis B virus (HBV) services through community partnerships and innovative use of health information technology, particularly electronic health records (EHR). Working with other community-based organizations, NEMS established free weekly screenings and vaccination clinics across the San Francisco Bay Area, making HBV services accessible to more AAPIs and other medically underserved communities. NEMS also implemented EHR and created a *Hepatitis B Registry*, which helped to streamline clinical operations leading to improved patient care coordination and quality, and resulting in increased screening and vaccination rates.

"We are honored to receive this award in recognition of our ongoing efforts to reduce the impact of hepatitis B and liver cancer in our communities," said Eddie Chan, president and chief executive officer at NEMS. "With our dedicated staff and partnerships with organizations like Hep B United, we are able to continue to provide culturally-appropriate and multilingual care needed to improve the health of our patients and larger community." NEMS is a non-profit community health center and is one of the largest health centers serving AAPIs in the U.S.

Jeffrey Caballero, executive director at AAPCHO and co-chair of Hep B United, said the *Champion* awards highlight not only the national efforts and successes of Hep B United, but also helps to feature the dedication of local partners who on a day-to-day basis increase hepatitis B awareness, screening, vaccination and linkage to care for all communities impacted by this disease. "In recognizing coalition partners like NEMS, we celebrate organizations and individuals in the community who through their diligent efforts have sought to truly alter the impact hepatitis B has had on AAPIs," said Caballero, adding, "We commend NEMS for its leadership and unwavering dedication to this work."

AAPIs account for more than half of the 1.2 million Americans estimated to be living with chronic hepatitis B and, consequently, have the highest rate of liver cancer among all racial and ethnic groups. Although hepatitis B is preventable with a safe and effective vaccine, and treatable with approved medications, most individuals with hepatitis B have never been screened for the disease and are unaware of their infection.

For more information about NEMS and the *Hep B United Champion* awards, visit Hep B United's website at:

<http://hepbunited.org/news#HBUCampions>.

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About Hep B United

Hep B United is a national coalition to address the public health challenge of hepatitis B. The goal of Hep B United is to support local community coalition efforts across the U.S. to increase hepatitis B awareness, screening, vaccination and linkage to care for all Americans, but in particular, for high-risk Asian American and Pacific Islander populations who are disproportionately impacted. For more information on Hep B United, please visit <http://hepbunited.org>. To learn more about their regional coalitions, please visit <http://hepbunited.org/local-campaigns>.

About NEMS

North East Medical Services (NEMS) is one of the largest community health centers in the U.S. serving the medically underserved Asian population. Based in San Francisco, the non-profit community health center offers health care services to patients, a majority of who are uninsured or low-income. NEMS offers linguistically competent and culturally sensitive services in many languages and dialects, including Cantonese, Mandarin, Toishan, Vietnamese, Burmese, Korean, French, and Hindi. For more information on NEMS, please visit <http://www.nems.org>.

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