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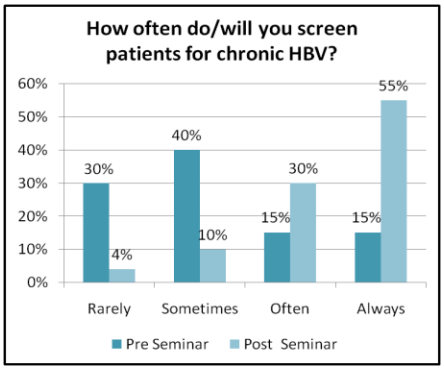
New Hepatitis B Educational Program Improves Clinician "Intention to Screen"

NEW YORK May 17, 2011—DKBmed, LLC, and Tufts University School of Medicine, through its Office of Continuing Education, are jointly sponsoring a new educational initiative called SCALE HBV™ (www.scalehbv.org) to increase awareness of the need for hepatitis B virus (HBV) screening, counseling, and education among primary care practitioners managing patients in high-risk communities. These communities include Asian-born and African populations, which have a high prevalence of chronic HBV infection. SCALE HBV is designed to educate primary care physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants about these risks and the need to screen and counsel their patients. A satellite symposium (hosted by key opinion leaders known for their expertise in HBV) was held during the 2011 American College of Physicians (ACP) Meeting in San Diego and attended by some 170 participants.* In addition, this initiative includes five regional symposia in Flushing, New York; Los Angeles; McLean, Virginia; San Jose; and Houston, — areas with a high prevalence of HBV. Tufts University School of Medicine designates these live activities for a maximum of 1.5 *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*™.



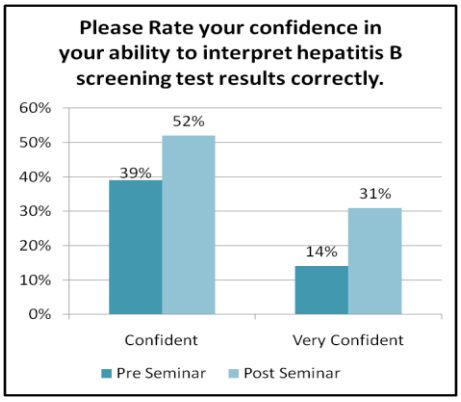
Participants in the SCALE HBV program presented in San Diego reported an increase in their understanding of HBV screening after completing the educational program:

- Fifty-five percent reported after the program that they would always screen their patients for chronic HBV, compared with just 15 percent before the educational program.

- The ability to correctly interpret HBV screening test results "very confidently" rose from 14 percent to 31 percent.

- The number of participants reporting that they felt "very confident" about correctly identifying a patient's risk for chronic HBV rose from 10 percent before the program to 47 percent after.

"These encouraging results demonstrate that educational programs such as SCALE HBV have the potential to change practice among clinicians," noted Geneve Allison, MD, an attending physician in the Division of Infectious Diseases at Tufts Medical Center, Assistant Professor of Medicine at Tufts University School of Medicine, and a Program Director for SCALE HBV. "This is good news, because the earlier we diagnose the infection, the earlier we can link patients to appropriate care and avoid potentially lethal complications."

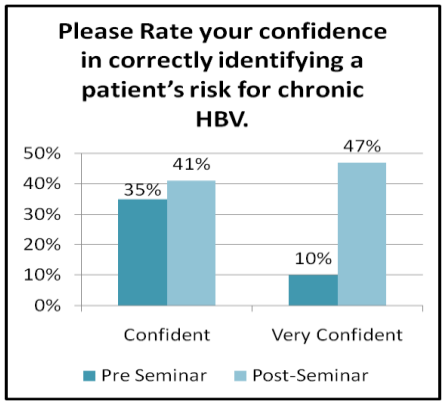


As many as 1.7 million people with HBV in the United States do not know they are infected. Left untreated, the infection can progress to liver cancer, cirrhosis, liver failure, and death.

Many primary care clinicians do not know that their patients are at risk for HBV. Increased awareness and training will contribute to appropriate screening, improved ability to interpret test results, and better treatment and monitoring for patients with Hepatitis B.

"SCALE HBV was designed to help close these clinical practice gaps," said Hannah Lee, MD, Director of the Asian-Pacific Liver Wellness Program at Tufts Medical Center, Assistant Professor of Medicine at Tufts University School of Medicine, and a Program Director for SCALE HBV. “Hepatitis B is preventable and controllable. The role of the primary health care provider will be crucial in our goal to eliminate the virus.”

"It is estimated that as many as 1 in 10 Asian-born immigrants in America are infected with HBV, but many of them do not know it," explained Calvin Pan, MD, Associate Professor of Medicine, Division of Liver Diseases, Department of Medicine, The Mount Sinai Medical Center, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, New York, Director - Clinical Research/Hepatology, Mount Sinai Services at Elmhurst Hospital. Dr. Pan is one of the hosts of the SCALE HBV live symposia. "There is a stigma associated with the infection, and many people do not seek screening for this reason." Mother-to-child transmission of the virus is the major route of infection among Asians.



Enduring materials associated with SCALE HBV include webcasts/podcasts from the symposia held in San Diego and patient education brochures on the dangers of HBV and the importance of screening. These brochures can be given by clinicians to their patients and are produced in five languages (simplified and traditional Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, and English).

Funding for this program was provided by an independent educational grant from Gilead Sciences, Inc.

* The event was not part of the official ACP Internal Medicine 2011 Educational Program.

About DKBmed

DKBmed is an integrated, non-accredited, continuing medical education company operated by a team of experienced medical education professionals and featuring the finest faculty in the country. The goal of DKBmed is to provide health care professionals with effective medical education that closes identified knowledge/practice gaps to ensure optimal patient care.

Working with accredited providers, DKBmed develops and implements live, recorded, print, and web-based educational programs. These programs are accessible through the company's web site (www.dkbmed.com). DKBmed's programs reach over 30,000 clinicians specializing in a variety of areas, including HBV, neonatology, cystic fibrosis, infectious disease, dermatology, macular degeneration, rheumatoid arthritis, pulmonary disease, nephrology, hematology, transplantation, multiple sclerosis, and pain management.

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