



# CONNECTIONS

A BI-MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER



THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR HIV/AIDS, VIRAL HEPATITIS, STD, AND TB PREVENTION

OCT-NOV 2008

### DIRECTOR'S UPDATE



**Dr. Kevin Fenton**  
Director, NCHHSTP

Greetings! October marks the beginning of fiscal year 2009. The new fiscal year brings reflections on past achievements and forward thinking on how to best continue our programmatic efforts and implement new and exciting initiatives.

This year, NCHHSTP is partnering with the Healthiest Nation Alliance (HNA), a collaboration of organizations committed to achieving optimal health for all. Did you know that if we don't act now, our children may be the first generation in more than a century with a shorter expected lifespan than their parents?

Many of our efforts at NCHHSTP are about engaging the public, and not just at conferences or meetings, but in communities, where people live, work, and play. This year, we hope to move this type of engagement to a new, broader level as we work with the Alliance to move health upstream to focus on prevention and proactive, personal healthcare.

You can get involved too. Take the pledge and join the HNA. The time is now. Sign up and get involved!

## New Hepatitis B Testing Recommendations Issued by CDC

On September 19, 2008, CDC published an *MMWR* outlining new testing recommendations for chronic hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection. An estimated 800,000 to 1.4 million Americans are living with chronic HBV infection, and many are unaware of their infection. Recognizing the significant recent improvements in therapies available for persons with chronic HBV infection, CDC recommends routine testing for

- persons born in Asia, Africa, and other geographic regions where the prevalence of chronic HBV infection is 2 percent or greater (including immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and internationally adopted children).
- unvaccinated persons who were born in the United States and whose parents are from regions where the prevalence of chronic HBV infection is 8 percent or greater.
- men who have sex with men.
- injection drug users.
- persons with selected medical conditions, including unexplained abnormal liver function tests and persons who require immunosuppressive therapy.

**NEW: MMWR**  
Recommendations for Identification and Public Health Management of Persons with Chronic Hepatitis B Virus Infection, *MMWR* 2008;57(RR-8)

The recommendations also call for continuing to test pregnant women, infants born to HBV-infected mothers, and persons infected with HIV.

For more information, please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/HBV/TestingChronic.htm>

## Laboratory Training Center Launches First Course

A robust laboratory capacity is critical to ensure a strong response to global HIV/AIDS. CDC, through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, has worked with the South African National Health Laboratory System and the South African National Institute of Communicable Disease in Johannesburg to establish the groundbreaking African Center for Integrated Laboratory Training.

This center will bolster Africa's rapidly growing demand for a well-trained and motivated laboratory workforce. The first course on Early Infant HIV Diagnosis (EID) was launched in September 2008. This topic was selected because, worldwide, children account for almost 14 percent of all new HIV infections. The EID course training will help healthcare providers diagnose HIV earlier in infected infants, ensuring earlier access to appropriate care and treatment, often before the onset of a rapid disease progression.

[More courses are planned for 2009. Click here for more information.](#)

### NEW FROM CDC

- AIDS DOT MAPS
- GLOBAL AIDS PROGRAM
- MAKING SENSE OF YOUR PAP AND HPV TEST RESULTS
- PROMOTING CULTURAL SENSITIVITY - TB
- VIRAL HEPATITIS



### UPCOMING EVENTS

**October 13**  
National Latino AIDS Awareness Day

### ON THE WEB

The NCHHSTP Director's Blog is live.