



# About Hep Free NNE

## Hepatitis Free Northern New England

### A Tristate Initiative: ME/NH/VT

Hep Free NNE is a New Hampshire-driven collaboration involving the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (NH DHHS), the Maine Centers for Disease Control (ME CDC), the Vermont Department of Health (VT DOH), and stakeholders across diverse sectors spanning all three states. The NH Viral Hepatitis Prevention Program provides funding and project management for the Hep Free NNE strategic planning process.

### Ending Viral Hepatitis B and C in NNE

The goal of Hep Free NNE is to develop a five-year regional viral hepatitis B and hepatitis C elimination plan implemented by each state's health department starting in January 1, 2025. The purpose of the 2025-2030 Hep Free NNE Elimination Plan is to provide evidence-based, localized, and actionable strategies that will free NNE (New Hampshire, Maine, and Vermont) from hepatitis B and hepatitis C.

### A Solvable Public Health Crisis

New hepatitis B and hepatitis C infections have increased with the overdose crisis, leading to a new generation at risk of future liver cancer, cirrhosis, and premature death. Meanwhile, vaccination against hepatitis B virus continues to be underutilized for adults, and treatment initiation for hepatitis C is decreasing overall, with approximately 40% of people living with chronic hepatitis C unaware of their status.<sup>1</sup> New data spanning 2013 through 2022 revealed that only a third of people with a documented hepatitis C diagnosis were cured over the past decade. Worse, for patients without health insurance under the age of 40, only one in six have been cured.<sup>2</sup>

Given the availability of highly effective, well-tolerated curative treatments, and proven harm reduction strategies to reduce transmission, Northern New England has the tools to free itself from the viral hepatitis epidemic. But preventing new diagnoses and curing those living with hepatitis C will take a coordinated approach. *Hep Free NNE brings together stakeholders across Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont to develop a plan for freeing Northern New England from the solvable public health crisis of hepatitis B and C.*

**Learn more about this initiative on page 2**



**The goal of Hep Free NNE is to develop the first five-year Northern New England hepatitis B and hepatitis C elimination plan by January 1, 2025.**

## Mission & Vision

**Mission:** To free Northern New England (Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont) from viral hepatitis B and C.

**Vision:** Northern New England is a place where new hepatitis B and C infections are prevented, every person knows their status, and every person with viral hepatitis has access to high-quality health care and treatment free from stigma and discrimination.

## Core Values

**Nontraditional Partnerships.** The success of the plan will depend on our ability to engage non-traditional partners focused on addressing an array of factors driving health outcomes.

**Syndemic Approach.** A harmonized, integrated, whole-person response to transform siloed strategies into systems of care is essential for addressing the overlapping epidemics of HIV, STIs, viral hepatitis, and injection drug use.

**Many Voices.** Engaging and amplifying diverse voices will result in more impactful strategies to free NNE from viral hepatitis.

**Harm Reduction.** Hep Free NNE adheres to the principles of harm reduction (National Harm Reduction Coalition) and is committed to developing strategies that celebrate the rights of people who use drugs.

**Intersectionality.** Addressing the many ways that power collides and intersects to create systems of discrimination, disadvantage, and barriers to health is a Hep Free NNE planning priority.

**FMI and to join the Hep Free NNE Planning Group, contact [HepFreeNNE@dhhs.nh.gov](mailto:HepFreeNNE@dhhs.nh.gov)**

1. U.S. DHHS. [Hepatitis C Basic Information](#). Office of Infectious Disease and HIV/AIDS Policy (OIDP). Nov. 30, 2022

2. Wester C, Osinubi A, Kaufman HW, et al. [Hepatitis C Virus Clearance Cascade](#) – United States, 2013–2022. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2023;72:716–720.