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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **BLDHD BRINGS AWARENESS TO WORLD HEPATITIS DAY**

Benzie Leelanau District Health Department (BLDHD) and the Northern Michigan Public Health Alliance (NMPHA), along with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Hepatitis Alliance, is bringing awareness World Hepatitis Day (WHD) on July 28, 2024. With 337 members in 102 countries, WHD is a day to unite patient organizations, governments, medical professionals, and the public to boost awareness of viral hepatitis.

### **Fast Facts – Hepatitis**

According to the both the CDC and the World Hepatitis Alliance:

- Viral hepatitis is one of the leading causes of death globally, accounting for 1.34 million deaths per year.
  - That is as many as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, or malaria.
  - Every 30 seconds someone loses their life to a hepatitis related illness.
- It affects more than 300 million people worldwide.
- There are over 2 million new cases of hepatitis every year.
- In the US, only 25% of the total cases get diagnosed
- Currently, 90% of people living with Hepatitis B and 80% living with Hepatitis C are not aware of their status.
  - This can result in the real possibility of developing fatal liver disease at some point in their lives and in some cases, unknowingly transmitting the infection to others.
  - Hepatitis is the leading cause of liver cancer.
- Both hepatitis A and hepatitis B are preventable with safe and effective vaccines, and hepatitis C is curable with prescribed treatment.

"Early detection, getting linked to care, and proper treatment are the key to slowing the progression of hepatitis to prevent liver damage and reduce the risk of liver cancer," stated Dr. Joshau Meyerson, Medical Director for BLDHD. "Fortunately, there is an effective vaccine for hepatitis A and B, and new treatments for those living with hepatitis C that can cure more than 90% of individuals."

To help raise awareness for viral hepatitis, learn your status and stay up to date on immunizations. The CDC recommends that all adults get tested for hepatitis C at least once in their lifetime and routinely for people with additional risk factors. You can learn more about getting tested here: <https://gettested.cdc.gov/>.

BLDHD can help you stay up to date on your immunizations. Make an appointment today by calling 231-882-4409. For treatment of hepatitis, we urge you to contact your healthcare provider.

Learn more about hepatitis at: <https://www.worldhepatitisday.org/>

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