New Tools for Hepatitis Awareness, Counseling, and Testing

May is Hepatitis Awareness Month, and May 19 marks the fourth National Hepatitis Testing Day in the United States. CDC recently released A Guide to Comprehensive Hepatitis C Counseling and Testing. This manual provides guidance for counseling of individuals at risk for or potentially infected with the hepatitis C virus (HCV), testing procedures, and interpreting the results. Several tools and resources are available to help promote hepatitis awareness, including buttons and badges, a hepatitis testing site map to find Hepatitis Testing events, and an online Hepatitis Risk Assessment. To further promote these efforts, please participate in the Be #HepAware Thunderclap on May 19. This tool allows supporters to sign up in advance and simultaneously share a unified message, or “thunderclap,” across social media platforms. At least 100 supporters are needed for the Thunderclap to take effect, so please visit http://thndr.it/1z5X2cf to sign up!

New Funding Opportunities for HIV Prevention

On March 31, 2015, CDC and HHS announced more than $185 million in new HIV prevention funding. These funds will help local health departments and HIV prevention partners expand the delivery of some of our most effective HIV prevention tools to the populations most in need. Through FOA PS15-1506, CDC will award up to $125 million over three years to state and local health departments to expand the use of two vital prevention strategies: ongoing medical care and antiretroviral treatment for persons living with HIV, and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for those at substantial risk for acquiring HIV. FOAs PS15-1509 and PS15-1510 will provide additional funding of $60.5 million over four years, from the HHS Secretary’s Minority AIDS Initiative Fund (SMAIF). These funds will support innovative approaches to address HIV in minority communities, intensifying prevention and treatment efforts for MSM of color. For additional information, see the NCHHSTP news release. The application deadline for each of these FOAs is June 1, 2015.