



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

## HOYLMAN ANNOUNCES LEGISLATION BROADENING ACCESS TO HEPATITIS A VACCINATIONS IN WAKE OF RECENT NYC OUTBREAK

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New York, NY – State Senator Brad Hoylman (D, WF-Manhattan), the only openly LGBT member of the NYS Senate, announced legislation today that would permit pharmacists and certified nurse practitioners across the state to administer hepatitis A vaccinations. While New York already allows pharmacists and certified nurse practitioners to administer vaccinations for influenza, meningitis, and other maladies, it is the only state that does not allow pharmacists to provide vaccinations for hepatitis A.

Hoylman's bill comes in response to a "significant increase" in hepatitis A infections as reported by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH). Just two weeks ago, DOHMH announced it had found 46 new cases of hepatitis A over the previous six months among New York City residents, the majority of whom were men who had sex or sexual contact with other men. Of the 46, only three patients reported having been vaccinated previously. Similarly, the Albany County Department of Health (DOH) reported eight cases of Hepatitis A in Albany County since early summer compared to just four cases for all of 2016.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), hepatitis A is a highly contagious disease that can lead to liver failure or death. The CDC recommends the hepatitis A vaccine for men who have sex with other men or other at-risk populations.

**State Senator Brad Hoylman** said: "When it comes to dangerous but preventable diseases like hepatitis A, access to care is key. As we saw with meningitis, allowing pharmacists and nurse practitioners to administer vaccines is an effective way to increase immunization rates, contain the further spread of hepatitis A, and prevent outbreaks in the future. If we're going to halt this outbreak before it becomes a critical threat, particularly among New York's LGBT community, we must expand access to vaccines now."

In response to an outbreak of meningitis in 2013, Senator Hoylman sponsored legislation – later signed into law by Governor Cuomo – that added meningitis to the list of vaccinations

that pharmacists and certified nurse practitioners are authorized to administer.