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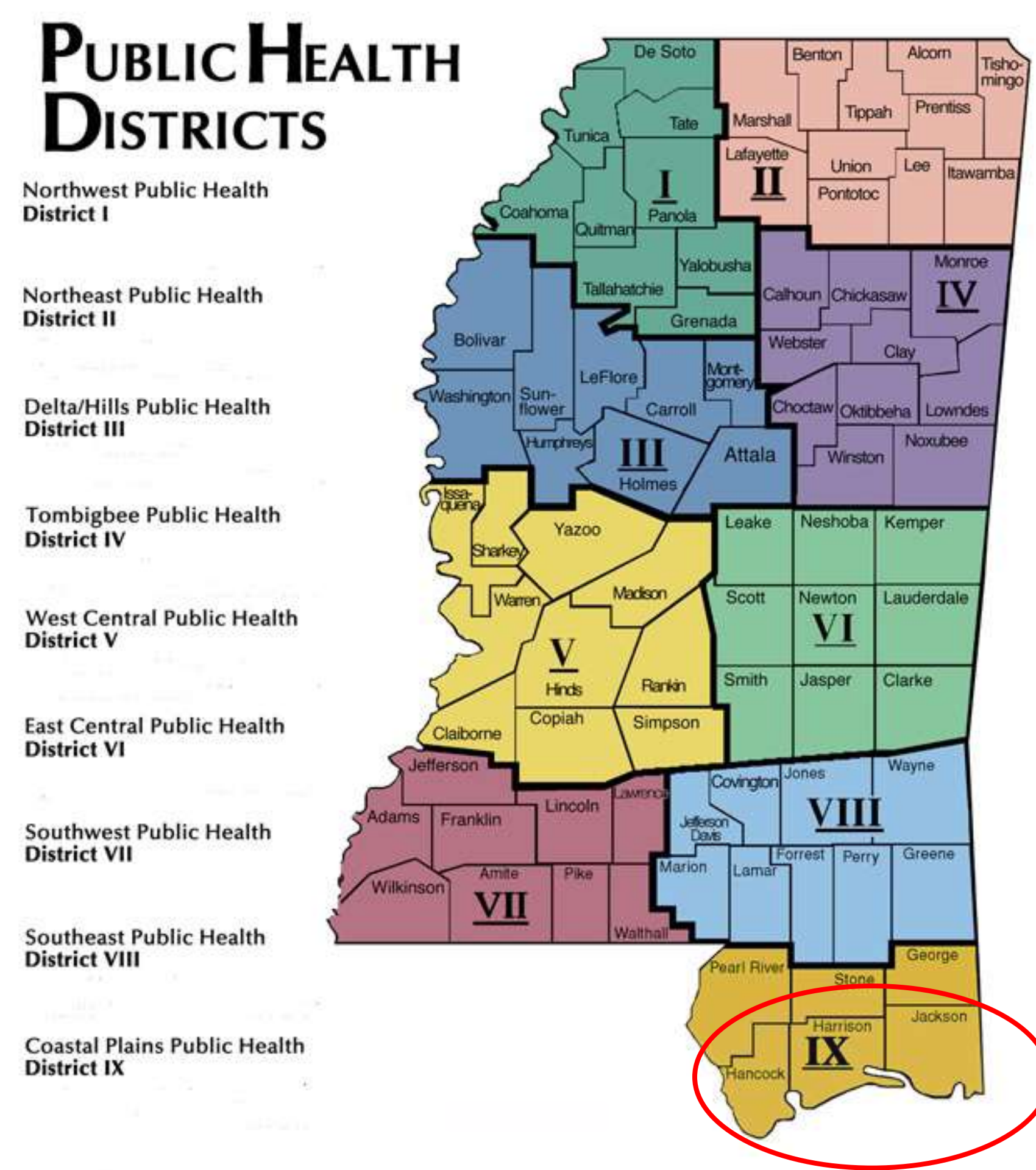
## Introduction

Hepatitis B is a blood-born communicable disease that affects the liver. It is spread through sharing personal items of an infected person; transmission from infected mother to unborn child; and sexual contact with an infected person. Estimates show that one in ten Asians and Pacific Islanders are living with chronic hepatitis B. CDC recommends routine testing in populations with  $\geq 2\%$  hepatitis B prevalence.

Vietnamese Americans comprise a small subset of the Southeast Asian American population in Mississippi, and the majority of them (approximately 8,500) live on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Screening for hepatitis B is inexpensive and the benefits include limiting disease progression and facilitating early access to treatments that can save significant life years.

## Objective/Purpose

The purpose is to increase awareness of hepatitis B in the Vietnamese population on the Mississippi Gulf Coast and to determine its prevalence in this population.



## Methods

Initially, Vietnamese community partnerships were established and language barriers were addressed as the hepatitis B education campaign was developed and executed. In-language seminars and translated print materials were used to heighten awareness regarding the importance of knowing one's hepatitis status. Subsequently, hepatitis B screenings were conducted by Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) staff during a series of community activities from March 2012-May 2013, and results counseling and referrals were provided approximately two weeks thereafter.

## World Hepatitis Day 2012



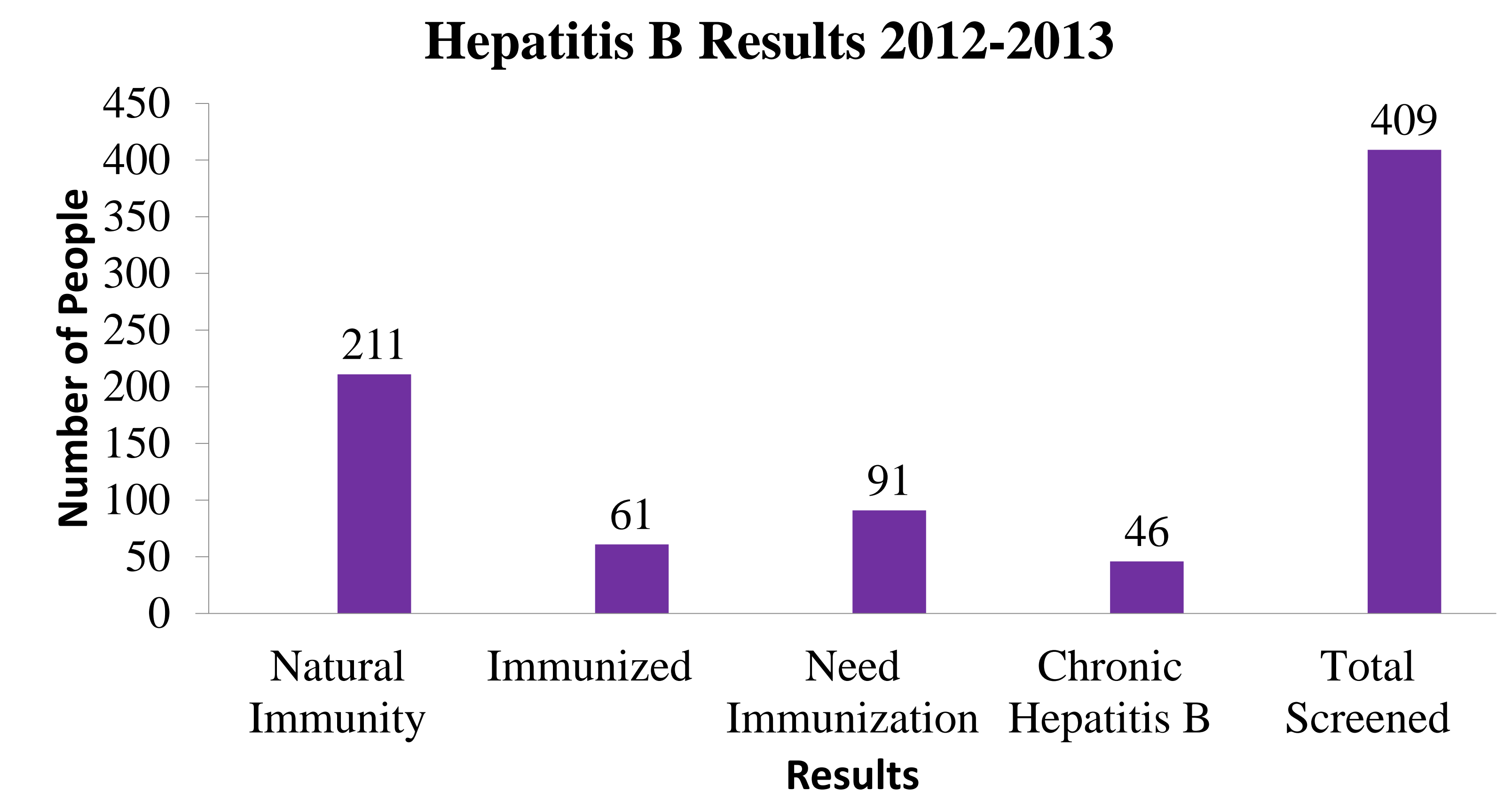
## Working With Partners

Asian Americans for Change  
 Boat People SOS, Inc.  
 Coastal Family Health Center  
 Coastline Medical Center, PLLC  
 Christ the King Catholic Church-Ocean Springs, MS  
 Digestive Health Center  
 Gilead Sciences  
 Hijra House Association  
 Mississippi Coalition for Vietnamese American Fisher Folk and Families  
 Mississippi State Department of Health-Public Health District IX  
 Mississippi State Department of Health-Public Health Lab  
 NOELA Community Health Center  
 Vertex Pharmaceuticals  
 Vietnamese Martyrs Catholic Church  
 WLOX TV Station-Mississippi Gulf Coast

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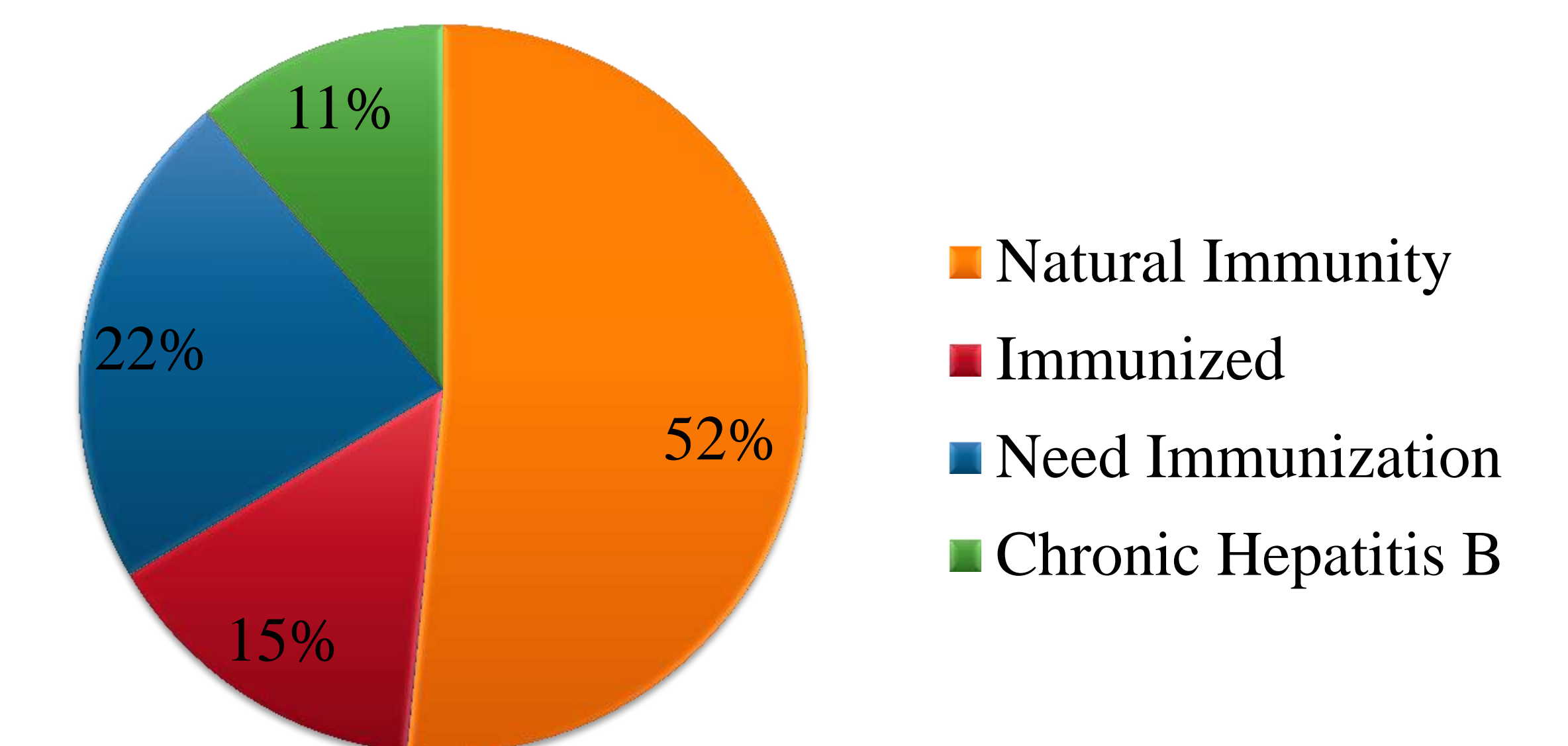
## Results

The MSDH screened a total of 409 Vietnamese for hepatitis B from March 2012-May 2013. Each screening event revealed a chronic hepatitis B prevalence between (10-15%), corroborating the national estimates.



## Results

Hepatitis B Results 2012-2013



## Discussion

The MSDH's coordinated efforts to provide timely and culturally appropriate hepatitis B education for the Mississippi Gulf Coast Vietnamese population resulted in significant community interest and desire for screenings, yielding important data for addressing hepatitis B immunization and treatment needs in this specific Vietnamese community. Referral sources were available for participants who needed immunizations and those who tested positive for hepatitis B; however, due to high uninsured rates among this population, treatment was rarely received. One challenge identified in working with this Vietnamese community, was that although referrals were made, once a person was identified as needing treatment, they lacked the adequate resources to obtain the treatment. Moving forward, it is imperative for health care professionals to work together; creating a system that links those identified with hepatitis B and those without health insurance, to the necessary resources.