

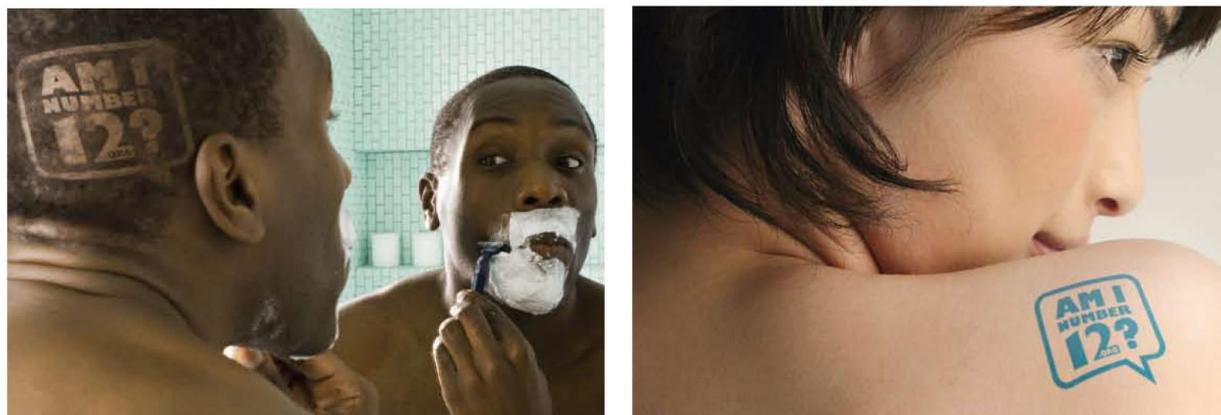
Press Release

Why The World Should Ask 'Am I Number 12?'

More than 200 patient groups launch global viral campaign

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Thursday 24 April, 2008 – The World Hepatitis Alliance and over 200 patient groups around the world are asking 'Am I Number 12?' (www.aminumber12.org) to increase awareness of the shocking statistic that one in 12 people on the planet are living with hepatitis B or hepatitis C and yet the majority of those infected are unaware.

Three weeks ahead of World Hepatitis Day on Monday 19 May, the World Hepatitis Alliance is launching a viral campaign aimed at getting people talking about the fact that approximately 500 million people globally are living with either hepatitis B or C. The World Hepatitis Alliance is asking people to sign-up to www.aminumber12.org to show support for the campaign but also to receive valuable information about a disease that kills some 1.5 million people a year.

The 'Am I Number 12?' campaign has already kicked off in 64 countries and high-profile campaigns are being coordinated from Sydney to Serbia and from Beijing to Buenos Aires. Charles Gore, President of the World Hepatitis Alliance, said that with 1.5 million people dying every year, chronic viral hepatitis could no longer be ignored. "Through the 'Am I Number 12?' campaign and activities around the world on 19 May we aim to put hepatitis B and C firmly on the global healthcare agenda," Mr Gore said.

Mr Gore continued that unlike other disease areas, awareness of hepatitis B and C remains inexplicably low: "We believe that, unless awareness improves, we won't make any progress in reducing the enormous

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and largely preventable death toll. Hepatitis B and hepatitis C should have the same profile as HIV/AIDS, malaria and TB and should really be up there alongside those diseases in the WHO's millennium goals."

Did You Know?

- 500 million people worldwide are currently infected with hepatitis B or C
- This is over 10 times the number infected with HIV/AIDS
- Between them, hepatitis B and C kill 1.5 million people a year
- One in every three people on the planet has been exposed to either or both viruses
- Most of the 500 million infected do not know

World Hepatitis Day

World Hepatitis Day will be observed on Monday 19 May and marks a brand new, entirely patient-led initiative. The day has been launched in response to the concern that chronic viral hepatitis has nowhere near the level of awareness nor the political will to tackle it that is seen in HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria. This is despite the fact that the numbers chronically infected with, and annually killed by, hepatitis B and C viruses are on the same scale. 'Am I Number 12?' campaign materials are available in over 40 languages – for logo images, postcards, posters and banner ads please contact the World Hepatitis Alliance at contact@worldhepatitisalliance.org.

World Hepatitis Alliance

World Hepatitis Day is being coordinated by the World Hepatitis Alliance, a newly established Non-Governmental Organisation which represents more than 200 hepatitis B and hepatitis C patient groups from around the world. The World Hepatitis Alliance is governed by a representative board of patient groups from seven world regions: Europe, Eastern Mediterranean, North Africa, North America, South America, Australasia & Western Pacific. For more information visit www.worldhepatitisday.com on Monday 19 May.

Contact Information:

International – Lorna Croft

T: +44 20 7395 7067

E: contact@worldhepatitisalliance.org