World Hepatitis Alliance

World Hepatitis Day Media Package

This media package contains information that may be useful when engaging with the media around World Hepatitis Day.

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1. Quote from World Hepatitis Alliance President, Charles Gore

'Viral hepatitis is the 8th leading cause of death worldwide, killing as many people as HIV/AIDS every single year' says Charles Gore, President of the World Hepatitis Alliance. '500 million people worldwide are chronically infected. In the face of these numbers how is it possible that viral hepatitis receives so little priority across the world?'

2. Information from the Global Policy Report[i]

Across the world:

- Only 37.3% countries have a written national strategy or plan for combatting viral hepatitis.
- 86.5% Member States reported the existence of a national policy on injection safety in health-care settings.
- 50.8% reported the existence of national clinical guidelines for the management of viral hepatitis.
- 63.5% reported that health-care workers are vaccinated against hepatitis B prior to starting work that might put them at risk of exposure to blood.
- Only 38.1% reported that they had held events for World Hepatitis Day 2012

- 81.7% reported at least one hepatitis B drug is on the national essential medicines list or is subsidised by the government.
- 65.9% reported at least one hepatitis C drug is on the national essential medicines list or is subsidised by the government.
- Only 20% people around the world live in countries where testing is accessible to more than half of the population (previous report).
- 41% people around the world live in countries where there is no government funding for hepatitis B or C treatment (previous report).

Viral hepatitis: regional statistics (change for each country)

Africa

- Some of the highest prevalence rates in the world, over 8% for hepatitis B, and 10% for hepatitis C in some areas. [ii]
- Co-infection with HIV/AIDS is a significant problem, as 60% global transmission of HIV/AIDS occurs here, and they are transmitted in similar ways. [iii]
- The only region where mortality from communicable diseases (such as viral hepatitis and HIV/AIDS) exceeds mortality from non-communicable diseases. [iv]
- Viral hepatitis mainly affects men in their 20s and 30s, significantly undermining the much needed workforce in developing countries.

Americas

- Hepatitis B prevalence ranges from 2-8%. Areas with high prevalence are often those populated by indigenous communities. [v]
- Hepatitis C prevalence among injecting drug users is 90%, 16-33% are co-infected with hepatitis C and HIV/AIDS. [vi]

Eastern Mediterranean

- Highest prevalence rates for chronic viral hepatitis in the world - ranges from 2-10%.[vii]
- 75% hepatocellular carcinoma and cirrhosis are attributable to hepatitis B and C.
- Egypt has highest prevalence rates, reaching over 25% in some areas. [viii]
- Civil unrest and conflict have undermined the health systems in many countries in this region. Having large numbers of internally displaced persons living in refugee camps without adequate sanitation has led to many outbreaks of hepatitis A and E. [ix]

Europe

- Cancer is one of the most common causes of death in this region, and liver cancer is significantly on the rise. [x]
- A third of people living with HIV/AIDS are believed to be co-infected with hepatitis C. [xi]
- 14 million chronically infected with hepatitis B, 9 million chronically infected with hepatitis C, compared with 1.5 million infected by HIV. [xii]

South-East Asia

- 21% of the global mortality associated with hep B, hep C, liver cancer and cirrhosis can be found here. [xiii]
- Chronic viral hepatitis infections are 30 times more frequent than HIV in this region. [xiv]
- 65% those with hepatitis B and 75% those with hepatitis C do not know they are infected. [xv]
- Hepatitis A and E are serious health problems. 12 million cases of hepatitis E infections occur here, more than half the global burden. [xvi]

Western Pacific

- This region contains only 28% of the global population, but accounts for 38% mortality associated with hepatitis B and C, hepatocellular carcinoma and cirrhosis. [xvii]
- Liver cancer rates in this region are far higher than in other regions: this region accounts for around 60% global liver cancer cases. [xviii]
- 890 deaths occur a day as a result of hepatitis B. [xix]
- Almost half of all chronic hepatitis B infections worldwide can be found here. [xx]
- With the exception of Australia, Japan and New Zealand, all countries have very high prevalence rates, reaching up to 8%.[xxi]

For country specific data, please email Hilary at contact@worldhepatitisalliance.org

3. Key global campaign messages

Key Message 1	
World Hepatitis Day this year was launched under the theme 'This is hepatitis. Know it. Confront it.'	• Despite the reluctance to have yet another 'day', World Hepatitis Day was adopted as an official WHO day at the 63rd World Health Assembly because Member States recognised that in no other field is the gap so big between the burden of disease and the level of awareness. • To celebrate World Hepatitis Day and this year's theme, the World Hepatitis Alliance is co-ordinating a global Guinness World Record attempt, aiming to have the most people performing the 'see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil' actions around the world in 24 hours. • These actions have been chosen to represent the main theme: just like the monkeys ignore the world around them, so the world has been ignoring viral hepatitis.
Key Message 2	
We must recognise the sheer numbers of people who are living with viral hepatitis, and reflect these numbers by assigning viral hepatitis a higher priority on a	• Currently, diseases receive attention and funding depending on their perceived global priority, which is often completely disproportionate to the actual burden of the disease. • Excluding viral hepatitis from global health initiatives fails to

global level.	recognise the significant burden it places on economies, and the sheer numbers of people who are impoverished through it. • As hepatitis rates are so high, the absence of resources, awareness and global pressure means that millions of preventable deaths by a major global killer are simply being ignored.
Key Message 3	
Viral hepatitis is one of the most underestimated diseases on Earth.	• Viral hepatitis is the 8th highest cause of death worldwide, with the same mortality rate as HIV/AIDS, approximately 1.45 million people.[xxii] 500 million people worldwide are living with chronic hepatitis B or C, more than 10 times as many as have HIV/AIDS. However, viral hepatitis remains tragically under-resourced. • Only 37.3% countries have a written national strategy or plan for combatting viral hepatitis, showing how under-prepared countries are to deal with this epidemic.

4. Spotlight On:

HIV and viral hepatitis co-infection.

- 2010 deaths from **viral hepatitis** 1,444,554; 2010 deaths from **HIV/AIDS** 1,465,368
- Over 500 million people worldwide are living with chronic hepatitis B or C, more than 10 times as many as have HIV/AIDS.
- Worldwide an estimated 4-5 million people are HCV/HIV co-infected.[xxiii]
- People with HIV infection are disproportionately affected by viral hepatitis.
- HIV co-infection with hepatitis C more than triples the risk for liver disease, liver failure and liver-related death from HCV.

Link with Cancer

- Liver cancer is on the rise around the world.
- Liver cancer has a high fatality, and is therefore the third most common cause of death from cancer worldwide.
- Chronic hepatitis B and C are responsible for 75-80% of liver cancers worldwide. [xxiv]
- 57% of cases of cirrhosis worldwide are estimated to be caused by HBV or HCV infection. [xxv]

5. Link to soundbites

These soundbites can be used during radio interviews, or sent to radio stations if they will be talking about World Hepatitis Day.

http://www.worldhepatitisalliance.org/WorldHepatitisDay/WHD2013/CampaignMaterials2013/Radiosoundbites.aspx

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[i] WHO *Global Policy Report, Viral hepatitis- prevention and control*, To be released July 2013
[ii] Viral Hepatitis: Global Policy, *WHO and World Hepatitis Alliance report,* 2010
[iii] Viral Hepatitis: Prevention and Control, *WHO report*, to be released July 2013
[iv] Viral Hepatitis: Prevention and Control, *WHO report*, to be released July 2013
[v] Viral Hepatitis: Prevention and Control, *WHO report*, to be released July 2013
[vi] Viral Hepatitis: Prevention and Control, *WHO report*, to be released July 2013
[vii] Viral Hepatitis: Prevention and Control, *WHO report*, to be released July 2013
[viii] Viral Hepatitis: Prevention and Control, *WHO report*, to be released July 2013
[ix] Viral Hepatitis: Prevention and Control, *WHO report*, to be released July 2013
[x] Viral Hepatitis: Prevention and Control, *WHO report*, to be released July 2013
[xi] Viral Hepatitis: Prevention and Control, *WHO report*, to be released July 2013
[xii] Viral Hepatitis: Prevention and Control, *WHO report*, to be released July 2013
[xiii] Viral Hepatitis: Prevention and Control, *WHO report*, to be released July 2013
[xiv] Viral Hepatitis: Prevention and Control, *WHO report*, to be released July 2013
[xv] Viral Hepatitis: Prevention and Control, *WHO report*, to be released July 2013
[xvi] Viral Hepatitis: Prevention and Control, *WHO report*, to be released July 2013
[xvii] Viral Hepatitis: Prevention and Control, *WHO report*, to be released July 2013
[xviii] Viral Hepatitis: Prevention and Control, *WHO report*, to be released July 2013
[xix] Viral Hepatitis: Prevention and Control, *WHO report*, to be released July 2013
[xx] Viral Hepatitis: Prevention and Control, *WHO report*, to be released July 2013
[xxi] Viral Hepatitis: Prevention and Control, *WHO report*, to be released July 2013
[xxii] Data extracted from the Lancet (2012), *Global and regional mortality from 235 causes of death for 20 age groups in 1990 and 2010: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2010,* Vol. 380, Iss. 9859, pp. 2095 - 2128
[xxiii] Lambotin, M et al (2012) 'Challenges for HCV vaccine development in HIV-HCV coinfection', *Expert Rev Vaccines,* Vol 11(7) pp791-804
[xxiv] http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/cancer-info/cancerstats/causes/infectiousagents/hepatitisviruses/hepatitis-viruses-and-cancer
[xxv] Perz, J. F et al (2006) 'The contributions of hepatitis B virus and hepatitis C virus infections to cirrhosis and primary liver cancer worldwide', *Journal of Hepatology,* Vol 45, pp 529-538