WORLD HEPATITIS DAY MESSAGE REACHES MILLIONS
NEW REPORT RELEASED

AFRICA UNITES TO TACKLE HEPATITIS

LOCAL ACTION FOR GLOBAL CHANGE
WORLD HEPATITIS ALLIANCE MEMBER UPDATES

WHO EXECUTIVE BOARD
A STEP TOWARDS ELIMINATION
Welcome to hepVoice, the monthly magazine from WHA. We will share the latest updates on our projects, news from our members and key developments in the field of hepatitis.

2016 is already shaping up to be a busy yet exciting year. Viral hepatitis took centre stage last month with high-level meetings taking place in Geneva and Senegal. We launched the World Hepatitis Day (WHD) report and WHA members across the world have been making real impact at a national level, with organisations hosting seminars, holding demonstrations, attending meetings with ministers and launching awareness campaigns.

We hope you enjoy reading the magazine,

Raquel Peck
Chief Executive Officer
World Hepatitis Alliance

Want to contribute?
We welcome your contributions so please get in touch at contact@worldhepatitisalliance.org to have your news included in future issues and feel free to share the magazine with your network.
On 19 – 20 January, WHA presented at the first African Viral Hepatitis Summit in Dakar, Senegal. Spearheaded by Danjuma Adda, WHA Executive Board Member for the African Region, the Summit gathered leading African and international public health experts, patient representatives, policymakers and physicians to discuss and better understand the burden of hepatitis B and C in Africa.

The outcomes called for:
- Comprehensive national plans which have robust prevention measures and access to affordable diagnostics and treatment
- Stronger healthcare systems and accurate data on the huge disease burden
- Adequate surveillance of the diseases’ patterns
- Reduction in the cost of diagnostics and increased access to testing
- Increased awareness of hepatitis and transmission routes
On 28 January, Member States and civil society groups convened at the World Health Organization (WHO) Executive Board (EB) meeting in Geneva to discuss the draft Global Health Sector Strategy on Viral Hepatitis and the aspirational targets included.

Encouragingly, a high majority of countries endorsed the strategy saying that it was a welcome advancement in combatting viral hepatitis and key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Brazil in particular showcased its support by advocating for its adoption at the World Health Assembly in May, which many countries agreed with.

At the EB, Charles Gore, WHA President, urged Member States “to recommend this strategy as it stands to the World Health Assembly for adoption in May”. He said “it has ambitious targets but we need ambitious targets. The Western Pacific Region’s ambitious target for reducing the prevalence of hepatitis B in children by 2012 was not achieved by every country, but it was achieved by the region. Please be inspired by that example.”

Although the meeting signalled an important step forward, more needs to be done ahead of the World Health Assembly in May. It will be crucial for WHA members and civil society groups to continue to advocate to their national policymakers to ensure the adoption of the strategy happens, ultimately signalling a pathway to the elimination of viral hepatitis as a public threat by 2030.
28 July 2015 marked the 5th annual World Hepatitis Day (WHD). This year 900 events in 159 countries took place and 86 national governments commemorated the day.

Check out the WHD Summary Report which highlights the activities organised by member organisations, national governments and WHO Regional and Country Offices and serves as an acknowledgement to all those who participated in the day. Read the full report here.

WHD 2015 in numbers:
- 159 countries participating
- 86 governments participating
- 39 WHO Country Offices participating
- 144 WHA members participating
- 46,132 individual tweets
- 903 events
- 341 million people reached
WHA Member updates from around the world

Mexico

Our members in Mexico, Fundación Hepatos Aión, AC, created a new campaign video, “Let’s talk about Hepatitis C” (Hablemos de Hepatitis C). This educational video aims to elevate their national campaign and increase awareness on the subject. Feel free to share the video on your social media platforms and with your network.

Chile

On 8 January, member group FupaHep organised a demonstration outside the Ministry of Health in Santiago, Chile, calling for access to new hepatitis C medicines. The demonstration attracted lots of media attention and the group were interviewed on radio and TV channels. The day proved a success and resulted in a meeting with the Ministry of Health.

Bangladesh

On 19 January, the National Liver Foundation of Bangladesh held a seminar on “Hepatitis and Our Responsibilities”. Professor Mohammad Ali, Secretary General, gave a presentation on the national and global hepatitis situation and put particular emphasis on the importance of the development and implementation of a comprehensive national strategy in Bangladesh. The event was attended by hundreds of students and attendees received free hepatitis B screening.

New members

This month, we welcome five new organisations to the World Hepatitis Alliance: Climbing for Carleen, Grupo de Autoayuda Unidos por una Vida Mejor, Hépatites Ressources, Viet Nam Viral Hepatitis Alliance and Zhwandoon Welfare Organization. Our alliance is now made up of 230 organisations in 81 countries in every region of the world. Greater unity and collaboration between patient organisations is key to addressing the global burden of viral hepatitis and eliminating the disease.

We love to highlight the great work of our members, so get in touch with updates on your national activities.
Join us on 16 February for the first webinar in our Tools for Change webinar series. Tools For Change is a three-part webinar series aimed at educating and up skilling patient advocates on various aspects of advocacy and the tools needed to effectively lobby for change.

The below panellists will convene to discuss the Global Health Sector Strategy for Viral Hepatitis and how organisations can use global policy commitments as a lever for national change.

The webinar will be held on 16 February at 10.00 am GMT and 7.00 pm GMT respectively. To register and for more information, click here.

Two subsequent webinars will be held in March and April which will look at the use of surveys as tools for effective lobbying and campaigning and the influence of media coverage on policymakers.

Do you have a new and exciting idea on how to deliver hepatitis B and C testing? Be in with a chance to contribute to the 2016 WHO Hepatitis Testing Guidelines by sharing your ideas by March 1, 2016.

The SESH (Social Entrepreneurship for Sexual Health) team in collaboration with the WHO Global Hepatitis Program is organising an innovation contest on hepatitis B and C testing to identify innovative examples of delivering testing.

For more information and how to apply, click here.