Join the collective voice

WORLD HEPATITIS DAY

Patients’ Legal Battle over Treatment

Patient voice at high level meetings

Access to medicines

Upcoming webinar

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A monthly magazine from the World Hepatitis Alliance
Last month was truly cause for great celebration: the adoption of the Global Health Sector Strategy on viral hepatitis (GHSS) heralds the most significant commitment to tackling hepatitis to date. We’ve seen at meetings from Taiwan to New York, elimination is the word on everyone’s lips. But now that we have the commitment on paper, we have much more work ahead. We must ensure countries deliver on their promises. The community coming together to push the approval of the strategy proved just what we can achieve when we unite our efforts. As we enter a new phase of implementing the Strategy, it will be more essential than ever to continue shouting with one voice. NOhep, the global movement to eliminate hepatitis launching on World Hepatitis Day, is our means of doing this. Together our voices are louder so sign up now!

We hope you enjoy reading!

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.
Where in the World...

Viral Hepatitis in Asia: Collaborating for Results

Hong Kong, China

On 7 – 9 June, the World Hepatitis Alliance attended a meeting organised by Wilton Park, an executive agency of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office that aimed to highlight the issue of viral hepatitis in Asia. The burden of viral hepatitis in Asia is particularly high, with more than 75% of all people living with hepatitis B and more than 60% of those living with hepatitis C, residing in the region.

The issue is therefore especially pertinent in Asia and the meeting identified specific actions needed to harness recent policy, research and scientific advances to reverse the epidemic in the Asia-Pacific region. WHA member Yellow Warriors Society Philippines were also in attendance and shared stories of the real impact of living with viral hepatitis, bringing the patient voice to the centre of the meeting.

Kaohsiung, Taiwan

Asian Pacific Association for the Study of the Liver (APASL) held a single topic conference looking at hepatitis C on 10 – 13 June. Evidence of their commitment to strengthening patient-doctor relations, APASL and the Taiwanese Association for the Study of the Liver kindly provided us with an exhibition booth. Eye catching signs and a prize draw drew delegates to the booth where they were able to find out about our work. WHA President Charles Gore also co-chaired a session at the event, gave a talk at Kaohsiung Medical University Hospital and spoke at a press conference in Taipei to pressure the government to start reimbursing DAAs.

Hepatitis C: Before and Beyond Cure

Hong Kong, China

Viral Hepatitis in Asia: Collaborating for Results
On 20-21 June, the World Health Organization, Zeshan Foundation, a private philanthropic foundation, in collaboration with WHO and US CDC, organised a meeting to examine the idea of establishing a fund of US$50-100 million to provide grants to projects that help countries take a public health approach to tackling viral hepatitis. WHA President Charles Gore delivered a presentation on the gaps and needs across the GHSS. The meeting decided that a global fund should be set up that originally concentrates on Asia-Pacific due to the high burden in the region. The need for particular support in advocacy and awareness and testing were also highlighted. Following the meeting, a revised position paper will be developed with the aim to have the fund operational by World Hepatitis Day 2017.

The Economist Intelligence Unit is currently running a HCV Change Makers recognition programme in order to identify and celebrate individuals and organisations as well as programmes and policies that are revolutionising the hepatitis C landscape and breaking new ground in combatting the disease and raising awareness. On 15 June, WHA CEO Raquel Peck met with experts to vote on the nominees for awareness and to attend a roundtable event to discuss innovative strategies to build awareness of hepatitis C. This was the first in a series of three theme-based discussions in a research, policy and advocacy initiative called The Path to Zero. The insights from the roundtable discussions will inform a white paper that will be published by the Economist Intelligence Unit.
World Hepatitis Day 2016

World Hepatitis Day 2016 is just around the corner and you play a central role in the success of the day. You can support World Hepatitis Day in a number of ways:

**Thunderclap**

On World Hepatitis Day (WHD) 2016 we are launching NOhep, a global movement aimed at uniting people from across the world to take action, to speak out and be engaged to eliminate viral hepatitis by 2030.

To launch the movement on social media we have created a NOhep Thunderclap. Last year the World Hepatitis Day Thunderclap was a great success, helping us share the WHD message and reach over 24 million people. We need your help to reach millions more again this year!

By signing up to the NOhep Thunderclap, a message will be shared via your Facebook, Twitter or Tumblr on 28 July and you will join the collective voice on WHD. To create a buzz we’re asking you to add your support and encourage your networks to take part too! Below are a number of ways you can support the Thunderclap:

1. Sign the Thunderclap
2. Add the Thunderclap to your email signature (instructions [here](#))
3. Embed the Thunderclap in your website (instructions [here](#))

**Map of Impact**

By hosting events on WHD, you join patient organisations, governments and the general public in raising much needed awareness. The WHD website features a Map of Impact, showcasing events taking place across the globe. Not only will this map allow you to publicise your activities and find out what’s happening in your local area but also highlight the collective influence we have on WHD. To publicise your event, complete the form on the WHD website.

Don’t forget a variety of resources are available from the World Hepatitis Day website to support your activities and events! These include posters, toolkits, infographics, logos, banners and more – all free to free to download and use widely to boost the impact of your campaign.
Advocacy is a powerful tool but in order to effectively advocate and bring about change, it is important to first build our knowledge in key areas within viral hepatitis. Following the success of Tools for Change, a webinar series aimed at up skilling viewers on different aspects of advocacy and the tools needed to effectively lobby for change, we are introducing Knowledge for Change.

Knowledge for Change is a webinar series aimed at educating patient and patient representatives about relevant topics in the area of viral hepatitis and will feature presentations from experts in their field.

**An Introduction to Access to Diagnostics**

This webinar took place on 17 June and explored access to diagnostics in the viral hepatitis landscape. Diagnostic tests are the foundation of disease control and elimination and this webinar gave an introduction to the topic while touching on some of the challenges faced today. Watch the webinar recording [here](#). For further information and the webinar slide deck, click [here](#).

**An Introduction to Access to Medicines**

This webinar will explore access to medicines specifically in the viral hepatitis landscape. With effective treatments available for hepatitis B and the increasing number of curative medicines for hepatitis C, access to medicines is becoming an extremely important issue, but one which can be complex to understand.

**Chair:** Dr Greg Martin, Specialist Registrar, Public Health Medicine and Editor-in-Chief of Globalization and Health

- Raquel Peck, CEO, World Hepatitis Alliance
- Dr Stefan Wiktor, Team Lead, Global Hepatitis Programme, World Health Organization
- Karin Timmermans, Technical Manager, Intellectual Property, UNITAID
- Esteban Burrone, Head of Policy, Medicines Patent Pool

[Register here](#)
WHA Member updates from around the world

Argentina

Just days after the adoption of the global elimination strategy, the World Health Organization, Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), experts and civil society from across South American countries convened in Buenos Aires to discuss national responses to viral hepatitis. WHA member Fundación HCV Sin Fronteras played a central role in the meeting and the importance of and need for civil society involvement in the development and implementation of hepatitis plans was reiterated throughout the meeting. The meeting culminated in a consensus document aiming to achieve equality in care for hepatitis cross the region.

Canada

On 16 June, Minister of Health, Jane Philpott, reaffirmed Canada’s commitment to participate in the global fight against viral hepatitis. Speaking at a breakfast on Parliament Hill, organised by WHA member the Canadian Society for International Health (CSIH), Philpott said, “We are committed to do the work to end hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030. We are working closely with provinces and territories to address the ongoing burden of viral hepatitis.” The Parliamentary Breakfast also marked the launch of the World Hepatitis Day campaign in Canada, which is spearheaded by CSIH and links some 65 organizations planning more than 100 events across the country.

Greece

Unsatisfied with The National Health Fund’s decision to restrict access to new hepatitis C treatments in Greece, WHA member Prometheus and the National Association of Liver Transplantation are taking action and contesting the decision to deny patients treatments and demanding a change in regulations. The request has been denied and the group are now taking the contest to the highest regulatory court in Greece.

United Kingdom

Following the NHS England’s decision to limit the number of people living with hepatitis C who can access new NICE approved drugs, WHA member The Hepatitis C Trust wrote to NHS England, asking them to reconsider. The response since received was unsatisfactory and The Hepatitis C Trust are now seeking a judicial review of the decision.

Patients take legal action to demand right to treatment

Patient groups across the globe are standing their ground and taking action against big institutions that are rationing hepatitis C drugs and costing lives.

We love to highlight the great work of our members, so get in touch with updates on your national activities.
Updates in the field of hepatitis

Steps towards elimination

France announces universal access to hepatitis C treatment

Ahead of the adoption of the GHSS, the French Ministry of Health announced it will provide universal access to hepatitis C treatment. From September 2016 everyone diagnosed with hepatitis C will be provided with direct-acting antivirals and everyone with stage 2 fibrosis will begin treatment immediately. Immediate access to treatment is also being granted to anyone waiting for a liver transplant and at-risk groups including prisoners, migrants, pregnant women and people who inject drugs.

Under the new rules up to 230,000 people in France could be treated but Minister of Health, Marisol Touraine emphasised that the prices paid by the French health system must be renegotiated. The Minister also noted that other European countries have been able to use the French price negotiations to achieve favourable deals for high-volume prescribing.