World Hepatitis Day 2016

Campaign launch

Elimination takes centre stage

World Hepatitis Day

All the latest from the International Liver Congress

WHA member pioneers new programme to prevent hepatitis
‘Elimination’ is centre stage again this month and we’ve been working hard to ensure the buzz around it is here to stay! Elimination featured highly at high-level policy meetings including UNGASS and the WHO SEARO and WHO EURO Regional Action Plan meetings. We also fully embraced the concept and launched the World Hepatitis Day 2016 website and campaign materials under ‘elimination’.

This month we held our third webinar and presented on NOhep..., a movement to eliminate viral hepatitis by 2030.

It has been another month full of great activities which we hope you will enjoy reading about.

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.

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World Hepatitis Day 2016

On 29 April, the World Hepatitis Day 2016 (WHD2016) website was launched. This year’s WHD2016 theme is elimination. To elevate the theme and to celebrate WHD a global movement will be launched on WHD2016.

NOhep is a global movement aimed at uniting people from across the world to take action, to speak out and be engaged to ensure global commitments are met and viral hepatitis is eliminated by 2030. You can find a full set of materials and information on how you can get involved here.
WHERE IN THE WORLD...

INTERNATIONAL LIVER CONGRESS

BARCELONA, SPAIN

Between 13 – 17 April, the World Hepatitis Alliance (WHA) attended the International Liver Congress where they presented and co-chaired a number of sessions.

- **Raquel Peck**, CEO, spoke at the opening ceremony to an audience of 11,000 people and reinforced the importance of multi-stakeholder commitment to achieve the elimination of viral hepatitis.
- Leaders of liver disease associations from Europe, the US, Latin America and Asia released a *Joint Society Statement on Elimination of Viral Hepatitis* calling for enhanced efforts to diagnose and treat hepatitis B and C, with the goal of eliminating viral hepatitis as a public health threat.
- **Raquel and Charles Gore**, President of WHA, led the WHA/ EASL joint session, the first ever policy focused session held at ILC with a patient group. A number of participants from across the WHO regions provided an overview of the hepatitis situation, including **Danjuma Adda**, WHA Executive Board Member for the African region. This was a great opportunity to educate clinicians about the global hepatitis policy landscape.
- WHO issued **updated treatment guidelines** which promote the transition to newer, more effective medicines that have the potential to cure most persons living with hepatitis C infection.

For a comprehensive round up of ILC news and expert analysis, tune in to Infohep’s webinar recording [here](#).

HEPATOLOGY ACADEMY

PARIS, FRANCE

On 29 April, Charles and Raquel, together with **Anton Basenko**, Senior Programme Officer at the Alliance for Public Health and one of the board members of INPUD, co-hosted a workshop at the inaugural meeting of the Hepatology Academy. The Academy is an initiative which aims to upskill the next generation of liver leaders in different areas such as policy and advocacy, and provide training in best practice patient care.
On 26-28 April, WHA attended the WHO South-East Asia Regional Office meeting to develop a Regional Action Plan on the prevention and control of viral hepatitis. All 11 countries of the region were represented, as well as clinical, public health and civil society experts.

WHA was asked to deliver some opening remarks from the perspective of the community, to moderate a panel debate on improving access to medicines, especially generics, and diagnostics in the region, present on creating and seizing global and national advocacy opportunities and facilitate a workshop on how to finance national hepatitis plans. One of our key messages, spelt out in our opening remarks, was the critical importance of tackling stigma and discrimination. We also stressed to the country representatives their commitment through the UN Declaration on the Sustainable Development Goals to ‘leave no-one behind’ and this became a theme throughout the meeting.

Following the meeting a draft Action Plan will be prepared and circulated for comment with the idea that it is presented to the Regional Committee Meeting for endorsement later in the year.
World Health Assembly

On 23 - 28 May, 194 Member States will convene at the 69th World Health Assembly where they will be asked to support the Global Health Sector Strategy on viral hepatitis 2016 – 2021. This strategy is the single most important document on viral hepatitis, and contains not only a number of clear goals for each Member State to reach, but also an over-arching commitment to the elimination of viral hepatitis by 2030.

If implemented, it could rapidly increase the numbers of people tested, diagnosed and treated, and could save 7.1 million lives by 2030. But in order to ensure that the strategy receives the support required, we need your help.

- Send a letter to your Minister of Health and other relevant political figures in your country and ask them pledge their support for the strategy.
- Outreach to the media and ask them to publish an article calling for governments to adopt the strategy.
- Share the Strategy Infographic video with your network and post it on your website and social media channels (you will receive the video the w/c 16 May).

Awareness as a Policy Lever

On 4 April, we held our third webinar in the series, which attracted over 100 people. The webinar explored different ways to create awareness and engage the media to change policy. It also included the first look at the NOhep logo and gave an overview of the campaign.

You can watch the webinar here.

World Hepatitis Alliance Activities

Upcoming Activities

Thank you to all who got involved with the HCV Quest media announcement. The story was covered in a number of outlets in 6 countries, including Argentina, Bulgaria, Mexico and Sweden, and across online publications, including Medical News Today. Through collective efforts like this, we can raise the profile of HCV across the world. Thank you for your support.

HCV QUEST

Media Activities

Access the HCV Quest Toolkit here
WE LOVE TO HIGHLIGHT THE GREAT WORK OF OUR MEMBERS, SO GET IN TOUCH WITH UPDATES ON YOUR NATIONAL ACTIVITIES.

SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON DRUGS: UNGASS 2016
NEW YORK, UNITED STATES

Following the annual meeting of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in Vienna in March, the United Nations General Assembly held a Special Session (UNGASS) in New York in April to discuss the global drug policy. The meeting showed that a number of countries remain opposed to renegotiating the three global treaties underpinning the policy. The reality is that drug policy has been much more driven by the law enforcement agenda. This is not helpful to our attempts to ensure greatly increased use of harm reduction measures to cut the rate of new hepatitis infections amongst people who use drugs.

The UNGASS outcomes document showed some progress towards a more health-oriented approach but only some. Knowing that this was likely and because hepatitis really did not feature at all in the first draft of the outcomes document, our very limited aim for UNGASS was to ensure that, whenever HIV was mentioned, then so was viral hepatitis. To this end we wrote to key Ministries of Health and made a personal intervention with this request at the WHO Executive Board meeting in January. Happily, countries listened to us and viral hepatitis has been included in the agreed final document, as we requested.

CHINA

Inno Community Development Organisation (Inno), a WHA member group in China, has pioneered a new way to reach and create awareness amongst recovering drug users in China.

Approximately 30% of drug users are infected with hepatitis C, of which 70% are unaware of the risks associated with unsterilized needles and the co-infection between HIV and hepatitis. To combat this lack of awareness, INNO, in collaboration with community groups, have developed a 9 month programme which provides health and emotional support to recovering drug users.

Group sessions take place once a month and as part of these sessions they have created a game on the education of hepatitis prevention. Already, Inno has seen an increase in the knowledge of hepatitis amongst recovering drug users and a reduction in risky behaviours.

WHOA MEMBER UPDATES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

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