Governments seize opportunity to save 7.1 million lives

Viral hepatitis elimination strategy adopted

Meeting in Mongolia to discuss

Innovative hepatitis financing options

Knowledge for Change webinars

White House honours WHA members
For the last decade, those of us involved in the field of viral hepatitis have rallied together around a vision; a world where people living with viral hepatitis have access to safe and affordable care and treatment, transmission is halted and people do not face social marginalisation and inequality. Ten years of efforts paid off. On 28 May 2016, 194 Member States committed to eliminate viral hepatitis by 2030. This is a momentous occasion and one which wouldn’t have been possible without the strength of patient voices.

Yet, there is still more to do to ensure this political commitment is continued. This month we have been busy elevating the patient voice – we hosted a high-level financing meeting, held a World Hepatitis Day webinar and welcomed two new members to the organisation. We also launched the World Hepatitis Summit Save the Date, which will take place in São Paulo, Brazil from 29 – 31 March 2017 (don’t forget to put the date in your calendar!).

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.
Elimination Strategy Adopted

69th World Health Assembly

Geneva, Switzerland

On 28 May, 194 Member States made a historic commitment to eliminate viral hepatitis by 2030. At the 69th World Health Assembly, governments unanimously voted to adopt the first ever Global Viral Hepatitis Strategy, signalling the greatest global commitment in viral hepatitis to date.

The Strategy sets a goal of eliminating hepatitis B and C by 2030 and includes a set of prevention and treatment targets which, if reached, will reduce annual deaths by 65% and increase treatment to 80%, saving 7.1 million lives globally by 2030.

“The adoption of the strategy was a momentous occasion where the hepatitis community came together to lobby governments and raise awareness in the media. Click on the images for more information.”

Although the adoption of the strategy demonstrates considerable political will, more work will be needed to make the elimination of viral hepatitis a reality. As of February 2016, 36 countries had viral hepatitis national plans in place and 33 had plans in development. That means 125 WHO Member States don’t have national strategies to tackle this global killer. A dramatic scale up in resources and prioritisation is vital.

The World Hepatitis Alliance and its 230 members will continue to work to ensure that countries honour their commitment and that they implement measures to reach the targets. To find out more about the strategy, watch our animated video, which also introduces NOhep, the first global movement aimed at galvanizing support towards the elimination of viral hepatitis, to be launched at this year’s World Hepatitis Day (28 July).
On 29 – 31 March 2017, the World Hepatitis Summit will take place in São Paulo, Brazil to provide a forum for efforts to implement the first ever Global Health Sector Strategy on Viral Hepatitis. Ahead of the Summit, the World Hepatitis Alliance’s Pre Member Summit will take place on 27 & 28 March aiming to bring together patients/patient representatives from all over the world to promote the exchange of experiences and strengthen our voices. Official invitations will be shared in June alongside the launch of the website.

MONGOLIAN INNOVATIVE HEALTH FINANCING DIALOGUE ON VIRAL HEPATITIS
ULAANBAATAR, MONGolia

On 4 – 5 May, the World Hepatitis Alliance hosted a meeting with the Mongolian Ministry of Health and Sports, the World Health Organization country office for Mongolia, the Asian Development Bank and financing experts to discuss innovative financing options for viral hepatitis in the country. The meeting came as follow up to Mongolia’s commitment to eliminate hepatitis C by 2030.

Stakeholders analysed a series of possible financing solutions for the country, such as reallocation of funds, introduction of taxes, loans and public-private partnerships. Throughout the discussions the issue of reducing the cost of hepatitis C treatment came to the fore. A report with a summary of the meeting will be available soon.
Where in the world...

Launch of WHO WPRO’s Regional Action Plan for Viral Hepatitis

Western Pacific

On 18 May, the Western Pacific Regional Office of WHO (WPRO) released their Regional Action Plan for Viral Hepatitis in the Western Pacific 2016–2020. Patient groups in the region have now an opportunity to engage their national leadership to advocate for national adaptation or adoption of this document. Furthermore, also available are the global hepatitis B and hepatitis C treatment guidelines and recently released global hepatitis surveillance guidelines from WHO HQ.

The next WPRO regional hepatitis meeting is a Member State consultation in Hong Kong 22 – 24 June, with 7 high-burden countries.

World Hepatitis Day 2016 Webinar

On 9 May, the World Hepatitis Alliance hosted a World Hepatitis Day webinar which provided attendees with information about and details on the launch of NOhep, the global movement to eliminate viral hepatitis. Watch here.
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.
These webinars will feature experts in the field and provide a unique
opportunity to ask questions on the topic. The first two webinars under this
platform will explore access to diagnostics and medicines:

**An Introduction to Access to Diagnostics**

**17 June 14:00 BST**

This webinar will explore access to diagnostics in the viral hepatitis
landscape. Diagnostic tests are the foundation of disease control and
elimination and this webinar will give you an introduction to the topic while
touching on some of the challenges faced today.

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

- Raquel Peck, CEO, World Hepatitis Alliance
- Anita Sands, Prequalification Team, Diagnostics, World Health
  Organization
- Jillian Sacks, HCV Scientist, Lab Services Team, Clinton Health
  Access Initiative
- Elena Ivanova, Scientific Officer, HCV & TB, FIND

Register here

**12 July 14:00 BST**

Following from the Introduction to Access to Diagnostics webinar in
June, 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 hepatitis C, access to medicines is becoming an
incredibly important issue, but one which can be complex to understand.
This webinar will cover the basics and provide a unique opportunity to ask
questions to our expert panelists.

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

- Raquel Peck, CEO, World Hepatitis Alliance
- Dr Peter Beyer, Senior Advisor, Department of Essential Medicines
  & Health Products, World Health Organization
- Karin Timmermans, Technical Manager, Intellectual Property,
  UNITAID
- Esteban Burrone, Head of Policy, Medicines Patent Pool

Register here
Hepatitis Australia held the 2016 National Hepatitis Health Promotion Conference: Navigating the Future – Opportunities through Engagement from 19 – 20 May. The conference explored Australia’s future health response to viral hepatitis, bringing together a diverse range of community and health sector workers, researchers and speakers from across the country (including a number of WHA member organisations). Participants heard an inspiring speech from Akram Azimi, 2013 Young Australian of the Year, whose experience on the Eradicate Polio Campaign could be applied to hepatitis. The conference also included a workshop on social and cultural experiences of people affected by hepatitis B, discussions on achieving national targets and presentations on various initiatives.

Across the United States, May is recognised as Hepatitis Awareness Month. As part of a month of celebrations, the White House hosted a National Hepatitis Testing Day observance. Co-hosted by the White House Offices of National Drug Control Policy and National AIDS Policy and co-ordinated with the support of the Office of HIV/AIDS and Infectious Disease Policy in the Department of Health and Human Services, the theme of the event was Responding to Viral Hepatitis in the United States and featured presentations from federal government leaders and community groups. At the event 12 groups were honoured for outstanding commitment to increasing the number of individuals who are aware of their hepatitis B and C status. Recipients of the award included WHA member organisations the Hepatitis B Initiative of Washington DC (HBI-DC) and the Charles B. Wang Community Health Center.

On 26 April, Livewell Initiative LWI held the Liver Health Confab in Lagos, Nigeria. The event was attended by WHA members from across Africa, many of which delivered presentations on important topics such as the patient voice against stigmatisation, increased testing and liver health in the workplace.

The World Hepatitis Alliance continues to grow as we welcome two new member organisations; Foie Sain from Benin and Women and Children Health Empowerment Foundation (WACHEF) from Nigeria. Our membership is now made up of over 230 groups in 82 countries in every region of the world. Find out more here.