The World Hepatitis Alliance (WHA) continues to deliver impact, with important developments taking place in Q3.

Once again the world joined forces on 28 July to mark World Hepatitis Day (WHD). We were overwhelmed by the sheer number of individuals and organisations who participated in the day and have shown their commitment to helping to find the millions of people who remain undiagnosed: the missing millions. It is particularly encouraging to see civil society making a stand and demanding action on diagnosis. Governments must recognise that civil society and the affected community are strong partners in their response to hepatitis. This message is reflected in our white paper that we launched at the WHO official WHD event in Mongolia. To mark the day we also distributed 25,000 hepatitis C tests to five member organisations across 4 different countries and we launched the Find the Missing Millions global campaign. Elsewhere hundreds of events took place all over the world, confirming July 28 as a global day for local action.

This quarter we also spoke on behalf of our membership at important events such as WHO’s Strategic and Technical Advisory Committee for Viral Hepatitis meeting in Western Pacific, the Australasian Viral Hepatitis Conference, WHO AFRO’s technical workshop for policy makers and the International Symposium on Hepatitis Care in Substance Users. Furthermore, WHA is now part of the Civil Society Engagement Mechanism and thus able to participate in high level discussions around the Sustainable Development Goal 3 and Universal Health Coverage. This will allow us to influence the global health agenda and ensure viral hepatitis remains a priority.

With regards to NOhep, WHA continued to grow the movement online and drive the visionaries programme for medical professionals. In September we had an official launch of the programme at the first ever Conference on Liver Disease in Africa. NOhep now has over 200 visionaries signed up and the next couple of months will see them engage further in the movement.

Finally, we updated our 2018-2020 Strategy and have very ambitious plans for 2019!

As you can see, thanks to the support of our sponsors and together with our members and partners, WHA had another very busy quarter. Much more to come in the next few months.

Raquel Peck, CEO

Stay up-to-date with our activities, sign up to hepVoice here
Worldwide, only 11% of those living with viral hepatitis are aware of their diagnosis. Unless we find the 290 million people - the “missing millions” - that have yet to be diagnosed and link them to care, all other efforts to eliminate viral hepatitis will only have marginal success.

Find the Missing Millions is a multi-year programme aimed at raising awareness, driving policy change and increasing testing at a national and global level. Recognising that barriers to diagnosis must be understood and overcome to reach our objectives, the programme will take a multifaceted approach to the issue. It will build the evidence base, engage with a range of stakeholders and help drive advocacy at a global level and on the ground. We will do this by putting the people affected by viral hepatitis at the heart of the solution.

- The three-year FMM global campaign was launched on WHD 18 with over 12 thousand materials downloaded, spreading the campaign message across the world.
- The White Paper “Overcoming the Barriers to Diagnosis of Viral Hepatitis: The Role of Civil Society and the Affected Community in Finding the Missing Millions” was also launched on WHD 18. It sets out the main barriers to diagnosis and recommendations on how to overcome these. For instance, the recommendations highlight that existing frameworks should be used to better educate, increase awareness and combat stigma and discrimination; that targeted testing strategies with integration into existing services are required; that testing must be affordable and accessible; that linkage to care must occur across all screening services and that it is essential that civil society and the affected community are engaged in all of these actions. The White Paper calls on policymakers to recognise those affected by viral hepatitis as vital partners and shows that by doing so they can greatly enhance their response to the epidemic.

HCV Testing Initiative

As part of the Find the Missing Millions programme we have partnered with InTec Products, an infectious disease diagnostics manufacturer, to distribute 25,000 point-of-care rapid tests for viral hepatitis C (HCV) to five World Hepatitis Alliance member organisations around the world. In providing these tests to WHA members we are increasing the scope of their screening campaigns and so helping to “Find the Missing Millions”.

- The partnership with InTec Products was announced with a press release on World Hepatitis Day.
- It was agreed that tests would be distributed to the below WHA members:
  - The Hepatitis C Trust (HCT) in the UK received 6,000 tests, which will be used to progress NHS England’s commitment to eliminating HCV in the UK by 2025.
  - United Against Hepatitis in Russia have been allocated 4,000 tests. The organisation aims to work with the charitable fund Humanitarian Action to test 4,000 people in St. Petersburg using three mobile points.
  - Spark of Hope in the Ukraine received 2,000 tests. They will organise rapid testing in one of four hospital districts in Ternopil, which is one of the most deprived regions in Ukraine.
  - Fundación Mexicana para la Salud Hepática (FundHepa) in Mexico received 6,500 tests. These will be used to implement a large-scale university screening campaign.
  - Fundacion Hepatos Aion, AC in Mexico received 6,500 tests. The organisation AC will partner with support groups in five cities to implement screening programmes for at-risk populations.

- All the donations were due to be with WHA members prior to World Hepatitis Day so that testing could begin then and run through to the end of the year. However, there were delays with customs clearance in all countries but the UK and the tests were not received until after WHD.
- In Mexico the tests were delivered without the lancets and swabs, which were also being donated by InTec Products. InTec and their local distributor have arranged for the delivery of these separately but as they only arrived in the country in late September it will likely push back the completion date for the screening campaigns there.
- There has been a delay in shipping the tests to Russia as InTec’s local distributor has not been able to receive them and pass them on to United Against Hepatitis as planned. This is because passing goods on for free is against commercial law in Russia due to anti-corruption regulations. As a result United Against Hepatitis are now exploring how they can receive the tests directly.
World Hepatitis Day (WHD) takes place every year on 28 July to raise awareness of the global burden of viral hepatitis and influence real change. This year we are using the momentum of WHD to launch the Find the Missing Millions campaign. Under the overarching theme of Eliminate Hepatitis, the campaign aims to raise awareness of viral hepatitis, increase testing both at individual and policy level and support linkage to care.

Once again the world united on 28 July to raise awareness and demand change. The World Hepatitis Day 2018 Global Summary Report that will be released in December will provide full details of events and activities taking place on the day. In the meantime here are some headline stats and a snapshot of activities that marked the day:

### Global participation

**144 Countries**
- Africa: 31
- Americas: 27
- Eastern Mediterranean: 18
- Europe: 42
- South East Asia: 10
- Western Pacific: 15

**91 Governments**
- Africa: 21
- Americas: 14
- Eastern Mediterranean: 9
- Europe: 28
- South East Asia: 7
- Western Pacific: 12

**1618 Events**
- Africa: 141
- Americas: 580
- Eastern Mediterranean: 229
- Europe: 373
- South East Asia: 145
- Western Pacific: 150

**53 WHO Offices**
- Africa: 10
- Americas: 16
- Eastern Mediterranean: 5
- Europe: 8
- South East Asia: 7
- Western Pacific: 7

**43,141 Social media posts**

**5,026 Press mentions**

### Mongolia

WHA represented the patient community, raising the profile of civil society engagement in viral hepatitis elimination efforts at WHO’s global WHD event this year. Taking place over three days in Mongolia, activities included a visit to the National Center for Communicable Disease, a press conference with the Minister of Health and a roundtable hosted by a Mongolian TV host and filmed for broadcast on Mongolian National Television. The launch of WHD 18 took place at Sukhbaatar Square in the center of Ulaanbaatar, followed by a visit to a clinic serving poorer community members in the outskirts of Ulaanbaatar. The event was a great success and a great opportunity to acknowledge the great advances made in Mongolia and to remember all the patients who are no longer with us.

### Nigeria

LiveWell Initiative organised a host of activities to mark WHD in Lagos. The organisation provided free testing and hepatitis B vaccinations and held an advocacy walk around the city with awareness raising placards.

### USA

To raise awareness of the importance of testing, the Hepatitis B Foundation asked people around the world to create short videos of themselves stating why people should get tested for hepatitis B. You can watch the videos [here](#).

### Macedonia

Hepar Centar Bitola organised a press conference with the Minister of Health to discuss future steps for hepatitis elimination in the country. They also took to the streets to raise awareness and hosted an evening of activities for the public with DJs and entertainment.
Egypt

The Association of Liver Patients Care (ALPC – Egypt) distributed promotional materials such as T-shirts, flyers and posters. They provided 100 nurses with free hepatitis B and C rapid tests and organised a fun day for kids with a puppet show and magicians.

Bangladesh

The National Liver Foundation of Bangladesh organised various awareness raising activities. They kicked off on 15 July by launching the Find the Missing Millions campaign among the indigenous people of Rangamati, Chittagong Hill Tracts, providing free hepatitis B and C screening. On 28 July, they provided free screening to thalassaemia patients, another at-risk group. To raise awareness of viral hepatitis among the public, they held an awareness rally with roller-skaters, horse-drawn carts and motorbikes and an educational seminar.

Chinese Taipei

The Kaohsiung Research Association for the Control of Liver Disease marked WHD with a series of public health educational seminars and community screening where 3,600 people were tested.

Challenges

- World Hepatitis Day 2018 fell on a Saturday this year. The weekend date meant that it was a challenge to replicate the coverage numbers we had achieved in previous years.
- A press release was issued by WHA on WHD, however this got very little pickup highlighting we still have work to do to firmly position hepatitis in the news agenda.
- WHO’s last minute decision not to use the overarching umbrella theme “Eliminate Hepatitis”, opting to have only “Test. Treat. Hepatitis” created some confusion. Whilst this did not affect participation, it inevitably weakened the messaging.

NOhep

NOhep is a global movement aimed at uniting all stakeholders to eliminate viral hepatitis by 2030. The main objective for Q3 was to expand the NOhep Medical Visionaries programme to Africa making it a truly global initiative, to encourage participation on WHD, to continue to showcase the amazing work of NOhep activists and to increase sign-ups to the NOhep movement.

Highlights

- NOhep at the first ever Conference on Liver Disease in Africa (COLDA), Nairobi, Kenya:
  - The NOhep Medical Visionaries programme was launched in the region.
  - Prior to launching at the conference we were able to secure 10 spearhead NOhep Visionaries for the Africa region, 6 of whom were at the COLDA meeting.
  - We presented on the NOhep Visionaries Programme as part of the main agenda and received positive feedback from those in attendance.
- Over 200 Visionaries signed up for the programme with many more downloading the NOhep guide for medical visionaries.
- We revamped our Supporter Spotlight Series, highlighting members working on specific issues, including women’s health and advocacy and accessing indigenous communities.
- As in previous years, there was high social media engagement amongst NOhep activists on World Hepatitis Day, with thousands of online actions and hundreds of on the ground events being undertaken to spread the NOhep message. For instance, in Ghana, rapper and celebrity supporter Okyeame Kwame organised a walkathon across Accra to raise awareness of viral hepatitis. Kwame used his personal influence and profile to bring thousands of people together, including members of the Ministry of Health, NGOs, and healthcare professionals. The walk ended with a dance aerobics session setting a light-hearted and celebratory tone.

Challenges

- We had some initial difficulty identifying spearhead NOhep Medical Visionaries in Africa, due in part to the fact that unlike in other regions no regional medical association currently exists. This had a knock on effect on our ability to capture the necessary information for the NOhep website from all visionaries ahead of COLDA.
- Due to differing schedules and the fact we were only in attendance on the final day of the conference, we were not able to meet with all the visionaries in attendance.
- Despite being the brand for the hepatitis cause, the NOhep movement is still to achieve its goal of reaching high profile supporters and having a wider public appeal, a crucial step for the campaign moving forward.
According to the mid-way review of the Global Health Sector Strategy on viral hepatitis, presented at the World Health Assembly in May, only 82 countries reported that they had viral hepatitis plans in place and of these, only 35% reported dedicated funding for such plans. A lack of financing strategic planning is clearly preventing the implementation of those plans. In the absence of large external donor funding, there is consequently a high risk that the strategies will not be effectively implemented, jeopardising the global goal of elimination of hepatitis B and C by 2030. WHA is working with the governments of two pilot countries, Nigeria and Colombia, to cost their entire hepatitis C programme in budgetary terms, develop a business case to support the required investment and then produce a range of options for financing the investment.

**FINANCING FOR HEPATITIS**

According to the mid-way review of the Global Health Sector Strategy on viral hepatitis, presented at the World Health Assembly in May, only 82 countries reported that they had viral hepatitis plans in place and of these, only 35% reported dedicated funding for such plans. A lack of financing strategic planning is clearly preventing the implementation of those plans. In the absence of large external donor funding, there is consequently a high risk that the strategies will not be effectively implemented, jeopardising the global goal of elimination of hepatitis B and C by 2030. WHA is working with the governments of two pilot countries, Nigeria and Colombia, to cost their entire hepatitis C programme in budgetary terms, develop a business case to support the required investment and then produce a range of options for financing the investment.

**HIGHLIGHTS**

**NIGERIA:** The work in Nigeria is being conducted in partnership with the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI).

- The final report setting out the process undertaken in Nigeria and the outcomes was finalised this quarter and will be published and disseminated through our communication channels early next quarter.
- Working with our members in Nigeria, we have drafted an advocacy strategy which targets Ministers of Health, national bodies and decision makers and calls for key financing recommendations in the report to be implemented. Work is ongoing to operationalise this and we will move into the implementation phase in Q4.

**CHALLENGES**

- Due to issues with internet connectivity in Nigeria it has not always been possible to have calls with the members there. This has meant that much of the consultation has taken place via email which can result in longer timelines to give everyone that wishes to feed into the process the opportunity to do so.

**COLOMBIA:** The work in Colombia is being conducted in partnership with the Center for Disease Analysis Foundation and the Pan American Health Organization.

- The Colombian Ministry of Health has approved the dissemination of the report. It will be published and promoted through our communication channels early next quarter.

This quarter we continued to actively work together with important partners sharing our commitment to advance the hepatitis response.

**PARTNERSHIPS**

**CHRONIC LIVER DISEASE FOUNDATION (CLDF) AND THE ANNENBERG CENTER**

Working in partnership with the Chronic Liver Disease Foundation (CLDF) and the Annenberg Center, WHA is delivering a CME accredited, satellite symposium at the Liver Meeting 2018. This educational symposium will highlight the most clinically relevant advances in the management of patients with hepatitis C, assess the effects of global hepatitis elimination strategies, share best practices in overcoming barriers to care and will offer interactive workshops led by hepatology experts from around the world. The program will focus on hepatitis C but will include hepatitis B given that there are clear synergies between the two and advantages to a more integrated approach. Discussing the global hepatitis elimination strategy and best practices for reaching this are in line with the principles of NOhep and as such this symposium will be an opportunity to inform a wider audience about our NOhep Medical Visionaries programme and encourage delegates to sign up.

The symposium will be held at 18:30 on Monday 12 November.

**CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT MECHANISM FOR UHC2030**

The aim of this body is to build strong civil society organisations’ voices and contribute significantly to discussions around achieving the Sustainable Goal 3 (which mentions hepatitis) and Universal Health Coverage. WHA is now a member and we are looking forward to contributing to those high level interactions. A meeting with key actors is being planned for the World Health Summit in Berlin (14-16 October); WHA will be present and we’ll share updates in our next quarterly report.

**FOUNDATION FOR INNOVATIVE NEW DIAGNOSTICS (FIND)**

This quarter we have explored potential partnership opportunities with FIND, a global non-profit organisation dedicated to accelerating the development, evaluation and delivery of high-quality, affordable diagnostic tests for a number of diseases, including hepatitis C. With our focus on finding the “missing millions” over the next three years there are clear synergies between our organisations and so we continue to discuss how we can best work together to amplify our impact. More updates to follow next quarter.
**EVENTS AND MEETINGS**

**AUSTRALASIAN VIRAL HEPATITIS CONFERENCE: ADELAIDE, AUSTRALIA: 13-15 AUGUST 2018**

WHO was invited to make a keynote address and WHO President, Michael Ninburg, took this opportunity to share his personal story of living with viral hepatitis and tell the audience about the history and work of WHO. The conference was attended by academics, public health professionals, policymakers and very importantly, patients and patients groups. This was, in his view, one of the best conferences with respect to patient inclusion and engagement. Participants showed great enthusiasm for the NOhep movement and FMM campaign. Most notably some delegates from New Zealand were particularly inspired to action by a slide representing a world map with the 90 countries with a National Hepatitis Plan completed or in progress. New Zealand is currently discussing drafting a plan and they now intend to use this slide to galvanise Ministry officials to action. Finally, of particular interest was the presentation of a hepatitis stigma index tool validated by Dr Carla Treloar from the Kirby Institute in Sydney, dissemination of which we intend to support.


The WPRO STAC meets once every 1-2 years to review and advise on the strategic direction of the WPRO Viral Hepatitis program. This year the meeting was combined with the Expert Review Panel on HBV Immunization and the EMTCT of HIV, Syphilis and HBV. WHA President, Michael Ninburg, was asked to be a part of the STAC this year to speak specifically about viral hepatitis testing in the region and the WHA Find the Missing Millions programme of work. Participants showed particular interest in WHA’s in-country advocacy programme (to be implemented next year – more about it can be found in our 2018-2020 Strategy) and expressed their hope that a group/country in WPRO be part of the programme. Top level discussions included the recognition of the progress made by Members States in the region on the mid-term implementation of the regional action plan for viral hepatitis. The STAC also acknowledged the challenges of implementing hepatitis programmes particularly in low and middle income countries and countries in transition in the Pacific region.

**EHEALTH & THE ELIMINATION OF VIRAL HEPATITIS: CHENNAI, INDIA: 11 AUGUST 2018**

WHO member, the Chennai Liver Foundation, hosted the first ever Summit on ‘EHealth & the Elimination of Viral Hepatitis’ on 11th August 2018 in India. The conference was opened by WHO CEO Raquel Peck who emphasised the important role of Civil Society giving examples of how patient groups are using innovation to enhance the elimination response.
**World Hepatitis Alliance Quarterly Progress Report: July - September 2018**

### Strategic Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Workshop for Africa: Brazzaville, Congo: 17-21 September 2018

WHA Board Member for Africa Kenneth Kabagambe presented on the importance of involving civil society in the response to eliminate viral hepatitis. The objective of this workshop was to build technical capacity of potential Hepatitis Consultants and WHO Hepatitis focal points from 15 high burden countries. This was a critical initiative that will enhance the collective work to support the initiation and scale-up of hepatitis prevention and treatment response in Member States. Key areas addressed included strategic planning, advocacy and viral hepatitis strategies (prevention, testing, treatment and surveillance) for country support.

### The International Network on Hepatitis in Substance Users: Lisbon, Portugal: 19 - 21 September 2018

This was the 7th meeting of The International Symposium on Hepatitis Care in Substance Users, which now convenes annually. At the Community and Policy pre-conference meetings WHA was asked to deliver opening remarks as well as deliver a presentation on best practices and policies to enhance HCV prevention and care for PWID (the latter was given by George Kalamitsis, President of Hellenic Liver Patient Association “Prometheus” and WHA member). We were also asked to participate in a meeting with the WHO Hepatitis and Harm Reduction Working Group.

### Organisational Updates

**AGM and Presidential Call for Nomination**

The 2018 Annual General Meeting was held virtually on 21st September. Members have until the 5th October 2018 to submit queries and comments and WHA will report back by 19th October 2018. The call for Presidential nomination was sent out on 24th September 2018 with a submission deadline of 22nd October 2018.

**Staffing**

It is not without emotion that we say goodbye to three amazing team members this quarter. We are always very excited to see people moving on when they are ready to spread their wings and catch a new air stream but of course we will also miss them both professionally and personally.

Karine Belondrade, Chief Operating Officer, was with WHA from nearly the very beginning and through her unwavering commitment greatly contributed to the organisation’s growth over the years. Bridie Taylor, our Communications Manager who originally joined the organisation as an intern showed great talent and was behind our dynamic and creative communications. Finally, we also said goodbye to Naomi Robertson, who was instrumental in the success of the WHS17 and is now pursuing studies abroad.

They all showed great dedication and went above and beyond to make a difference for the people living with viral hepatitis. Any organisation will be lucky to have them on their team.

**Welcome**

We are delighted to welcome Chris Wingrove as Head of Communications and Dominique Webb as Head of Strategy and Operations. They are both very familiar with the plight of people living with viral hepatitis particularly the issues of social stigma and vulnerable communities; Chris was Head of Communications at the Forward Trust, a national UK charity that supports people to break the cycles of crime and addiction while Dominique joins us from Women in Prison, a national UK charity delivering services and campaigning for women affected by the Criminal Justice System, where she held the position of Operations Director.

Furthermore, this quarter we are also welcoming Jack McDonald as our newest intern. Jack was the Campaigns and Policy intern for Action on Smoking and Health and will be supporting our comms team. As we prepare to embark on the second year of our 3-year strategic plan to Find the Missing Millions, they are all joining the team at a very exciting time.