Globally, there are 27 countries participating, 14 governments participating, 31 countries participating, 21 governments participating, 18 countries participating, 9 governments participating, 10 countries participating, 7 governments participating, 15 countries participating, 12 governments participating, and 10 countries participating, 7 governments participating.
## Participation
- **144** Country participation
- **147** WHA Member participation
- **93** Government participation
- **53** WHO Country Office participation

## Impact
- **47,702** People tested
- **318,914** People attended events
- **5,317** People vaccinated

## Response
- **1,619** Events
- **5,026** Press mentions
- **43,141** Social media posts
- **212** Campaign supporters
- **3,385** Custom posters created
On 28 July 2018, individuals and organisations around the world celebrated the eighth official World Hepatitis Day (WHD), one of just four disease-specific global awareness days officially endorsed by the World Health Organization (WHO).

WHD 2018 saw the launch of Find the Missing Millions, a three-year global advocacy and awareness-raising campaign, launched by the World Hepatitis Alliance (WHA). WHO held events and activities using the theme Test. Treat. Hepatitis.

This year’s participation figures demonstrate the continued global influence and impact of the day, with 144 countries, 93 governments and 53 WHO Country Offices taking part across the six regions. Over 1,600 events were organised, and a staggering 318,914 people attended events in their local community or country, while over millions more were reached online via global media, and the Find the Missing Millions social media campaign.

WHD 2018 events were as varied as the countries they took place in, from big awareness-raising events in central squares of capital cities, to testing drives in remote mountainous villages. Press conferences, educational seminars, high-level meetings, marches, and testing and vaccination events were held across the globe. Heads of State, ministers, politicians, celebrities, health professionals, private companies, civil society organisations, the media and the general public all showed their support for the day.

This Global Summary Report celebrates the efforts of WHA Members, governments, and WHO Regional and Country Offices, and other participants who marked the day. By showcasing these events and activities we hope to provide inspiration to those who will organise and hold similar events in future.

In offering details of how WHD events were planned and executed, the report can be used as a reference point or toolkit for all those planning WHD events next year.

MESSAGE FROM WORLD HEPATITIS ALLIANCE CEO RAQUEL PECK

With so many ‘world days’ populating our calendars, many people remain sceptical about the impact of global awareness days. However, World Hepatitis Day (WHD) proves the sceptics wrong.

In ten short years, WHD has evolved and exceeded all expectations: from the first community-led WHD in 2008, supported by patient groups from around 47 countries, to 2018 where millions of supporters in almost every country in the world celebrated the day.

This year WHA has used the momentum of WHD to catalyse further action in the area of diagnosis. Currently 9 out of 10 people living with viral hepatitis are unaware. As such, on July 28, we launched ‘Find the Missing Millions’ a three-year global advocacy and awareness-raising programme aiming to help countries reach the global target to diagnose 30% of people by 2020 and 90% by 2030.

Elsewhere in the world, WHD 2018 was marked with a variety of activities spanning screening and vaccination drives, public seminars, press briefings, marches and awareness events. It’s truly encouraging to see so many people coming together to raise awareness of the huge burden of viral hepatitis and to achieve progress in disease prevention and access to testing, treatment and care.

Thank you for your commitment to realising a world free from hepatitis. However you celebrated WHD this year, and whether your actions were big or small, the efforts of every individual and organisation have contributed to lives being saved and progress being made. We look forward to ongoing collaboration as we continue in our quest to Find the Missing Millions and work towards our shared goal of eliminating viral hepatitis by 2030.
WHY IS WORLD HEPATITIS DAY IMPORTANT?

Hepatitis B and C cause over 1.3 million deaths per year – more than HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis or malaria. These two viruses are responsible for two in every three cases of liver cancer deaths worldwide.

Of the 325 million people living with viral hepatitis globally, 9 out of 10 are living with hepatitis B or hepatitis C without knowing. This increases the likelihood of people with the disease transmitting it to others, and also puts them at risk of developing health and liver complications, ultimately leading to liver cancer or fatal liver disease.

In 2016, 194 governments adopted WHO’s Global Strategy on Viral Hepatitis, which includes a goal of eliminating hepatitis B and C by 2030, and reaching a 30% diagnosis rate by 2020 – but only a handful of countries are on track to meet these targets.

The global commitment to eliminate viral hepatitis is achievable, thanks to the availability of effective vaccines and treatments for hepatitis B, and a cure for hepatitis C. However, with 290 million people currently unaware they are infected, we are at a critical juncture. Even greater efforts are required to raise the profile of the disease, increase opportunities for testing, and improve access to genuinely affordable treatment.

This is why World Hepatitis Day is more important than ever. On this one day of the year, we have a monumental opportunity to unite around the common goal of eliminating hepatitis, and encourage policymakers, medical professionals, industry, the media, and the general public to raise awareness of viral hepatitis and join the fight to eliminate the disease by 2030.
The WHO Global Health Sector Strategy on Viral Hepatitis, 2016-2021, calls for a major increase in diagnosis of chronic viral hepatitis B and C infection, with 30% of people infected knowing their status by 2020 and 90% by 2030. Earlier this year, the WHA commissioned and published a global survey, Find the Missing Millions: Barriers to diagnosis research, to better understand the main barriers to hepatitis B and hepatitis C diagnosis globally.

The research revealed five key barriers hindering diagnosis: lack of public knowledge of the diseases, lack of knowledge among healthcare professionals, lack of easily accessible treatment, pervasive stigma and discrimination, and the out-of-pocket costs to patients. Overcoming these barriers will be critical if we are to achieve elimination.

Launched on WHD 2018, the Find the Missing Millions campaign is a three-year global awareness-raising and advocacy campaign aimed at tackling the main barriers to diagnosis by leveraging the unique and critical role civil society organisations and the affected community play in scaling-up diagnosis.

To support the campaign, WHA also launched a white paper on WHD highlighting the barriers to hepatitis diagnosis, presenting key recommendations on the role the community can play in addressing them.

No one should have to live with viral hepatitis without knowing it. Yet, globally more than 290 million men, women and children do. Without a massive scale-up in diagnosis, treatment rates will fall, infection rates will rise and our opportunity to eliminate viral hepatitis by 2030 will be lost.
The campaign brought much needed attention to the fact that millions of people are living with viral hepatitis unaware. It was also used to inspire communities to promote and take part in testing and vaccination drives, to raise awareness of the need for increased diagnosis and linkage to care, and to highlight the need for national testing programmes to political decision makers.
WHO focused on the theme “Test. Treat. Hepatitis” for World Hepatitis Day 2018 events and called on countries to urgently increase hepatitis testing and treatment services in order to eliminate viral hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030.

**WHO EVENT IN MONGOLIA**

The official 2018 World Hepatitis Day event was held in Mongolia in Sukhbaatar Square, Ulaanbaatar and was organised by WHO, the Government of Mongolia, and Mongolia’s Ministry of Health. The event featured live music and a flash mob with more than 2,000 people getting tested for hepatitis B and hepatitis C. The Deputy Prime Minister of Mongolia and the Minister for Health both made speeches at the event which WHA President, Michael Ninburg, attended.

Mongolia’s Ministry of Health and WHO also held a joint press conference two days before the event. Dr Gottfried Hirnschall, Director of WHO’s HIV/AIDS Department and the Global Hepatitis Programme, urged governments and other stakeholders to increase the availability of diagnostic and treatment opportunities to achieve the goal of eliminating viral hepatitis by 2030. He also announced that WHO had issued a new International Therapeutic Treatment Guide to intensify hepatitis elimination activity and provide a cure to the 70 million people living with chronic hepatitis C.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMITMENTS**

- **Nigeria**’s Minister of Health, Professor Isaac Adewole, launched the Nigerian Viral Hepatitis Health Facility Directory at a press briefing. The directory provides information on existing health facilities where hepatitis services are being provided.

- WHA Member in **Ghana** Save Your Liver Foundation (SYLF) and Ghana Health Service launched a fund, the Ghana Liver Hepatitis Fund, aiming to enable ten regions to implement programmes in line with the National Policy Guideline on Viral Hepatitis to help curb the disease.

- **Mexico**’s Health Secretary, José Narro Robles, gave a statement announcing that public health insurance company, Seguro Popular, would expand its coverage of care to all patients with hepatitis C.

- **Saudi Arabia**’s Ministry of Health announced a joint venture agreement with AbbVie to intensify their efforts to eliminate hepatitis C in the country by 2030. As part of this, the Ministry declared that it would test 100,000 people by the end of 2018.

- **The UAE** Ministry of Health and Community Protection launched an awareness-raising campaign at Sharjah Training and Development Center on the importance of early detection. The launch event included free medical examinations and the distribution of materials on transmission routes, prevention methods, diagnosis, and treatment options.

- **India**’s Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and WHO Country Office in India launched the National Viral Hepatitis Control Programme, aiming to eliminate the disease in India by 2030.

- **Bulgaria**’s Health Committee of the National Assembly and Ministry of Health hosted a two-day, high-level regional conference attended by representatives of 10 countries from the Central and Eastern Europe region. The event closed with the adoption of a resolution committing participants to develop comprehensive programmes for the screening and prevention of viral hepatitis and HIV.

The Governor of New York State, USA, Andrew Cuomo, announced the nation’s first strategy to eliminate hepatitis C, including the establishment of a Hepatitis C Elimination Task Force that will advise the state as it implements its plan. The elimination effort aims to stop the spread of the virus by increasing access to medications that can cure hepatitis C and expanding programs to connect New Yorkers with prevention, screening and treatment services.
INVolvement From CeleBRITIES AnD PUBLIC FIGURES

Ghanaian rapper Okyeame Kwame’s OK Foundation held its annual World Hepatitis Day event at the Silver Star Tower in Accra in collaboration with WHA Members Hepatitis Foundation of Ghana, Hepatitis Coalition of Ghana and Comfort Foundation. In the morning, the OK Foundation led a parade with walkers, cyclers and aerobics activity. Free hepatitis B screening and vaccinations were then provided where 20% of people tested positive for hepatitis B, an unprecedented rate for the event.

Niger’s First Lady, Aïssata Issoufou, in her role as President of the Guri Vie Meilleur Foundation, organised a caravan to conduct awareness raising and testing for viral hepatitis in five communes in Niamey. The testing drive began on World Hepatitis Day and continued over the following week.

Japan’s Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare launched a new national hepatitis C campaign to promote awareness of hepatitis and the importance of testing, ensuring that the public has accurate knowledge of the disease, early detection and early treatment. The Ministry also announced that Japanese female pop idol group Nogizaka 46 had been appointed as supporters of the campaign.

WHA Member Swiss Hepatitis launched an online and offline awareness campaign with Swiss celebrities, aiming to increase testing for viral hepatitis. The campaign featured doctor and comedian, Fabian Unteregger, and writer, Pedro Lenz.

How to use this report

The 2018 World Hepatitis Day Global Summary Report strives to provide an accurate overview of the events and activities that took place for WHD 2018. Given the phenomenal level of participation in 2018, the report is only able to give full details about activities carried out by WHA Members, national governments and WHO Country Offices. Activities held by other organisations have been included in regional and global statistics, and also mentioned in the ‘other participating organisations’ section. Every effort has been made to include all activities, but inevitably research will not uncover absolutely all information. If we have missed something from the report, please do contact us at contact@worldhepatitisalliance.org.
CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

POSTERS AND CUSTOMISABLE POSTER TOOL

For the Find the Missing Millions campaign, a set of 15 editable posters were developed based on the campaign messaging. The posters were available in seven languages and were also customisable through the online poster tool. The tool allowed people to create their own custom posters by translating the messages into any language, inserting their own messages suitable for their audiences, and adding their organisation logo. These posters were shared on social media, used in media outreach and displayed at local events. They also helped to create a unified global campaign.

TOOLKITS

A campaign toolkit was produced to help people and organisations with practical guidance and information to use in the lead-up to, during, and after World Hepatitis Day.

LOGOS AND BANNERS

The Find the Missing Millions campaign logo was the primary logo for the 2018 campaign. The World Hepatitis Day logo was also provided in 40 languages.

ONLINE PARTICIPATION

511 million
Impressions on Twitter

#WorldHepatitisDay
trended in India, Switzerland, Spain, Mexico and Ecuador

12,278
campaign materials downloaded

225 million
people signed the Thunderclap, with a reach of 1,558,972

476
people signed up to Join the Quest to find the missing millions
World Hepatitis Day provides an ideal opportunity: a chance to meet and raise awareness of viral hepatitis with the public, the international media and the global health agenda, and to begin the eradication of viral hepatitis by 2030. It is also an opportunity to take stock, identify strengths and weaknesses, and establish perspectives for achieving the goal of eliminating viral hepatitis by 2030.

SOS Hépatites Burkina, Burkina Faso
Message from WHO Regional Director for Africa, Dr Matshidiso Moeti

On July 28, the WHO African Region will join the global celebration of World Hepatitis Day. The theme “Test.Treat.Hepatitis” draws attention to hepatitis B and C virus infections that cause long term (chronic) inflammation of the liver that leads to extensive scarring, liver cancer and untimely death. The goal of World Hepatitis Day is to raise awareness of these infections and the importance of testing early because treatment is readily available.

Worldwide, there are 323 million people infected with Hepatitis B or C virus, a burden 10 times larger than the HIV epidemic. Over 1.4 million people die annually from liver disease caused by untreated infection including two out of every three liver cancer deaths.

In Africa, hepatitis B and C is a silent epidemic affecting over 70 million people. Among infected persons, 9 out of every 10 have never been tested because of lack of awareness and poor access to testing and treatment. I share the story of Bari, a 23-year-old boy who was diagnosed with Hepatitis B infection. His older sister developed yellow eyes and swollen belly, and recently died of liver cancer. “It was horrifying to discover the cause of her illness was hepatitis B infection. We must have become infected through minor cuts and close contact in childhood. We did not know that the infection could be silent for so long and its consequences so devastating.”

There is hope for Bari and millions like him. Cost effective medicines are available to control hepatitis B infection and prevent liver disease. Also, the Hepatitis B vaccine given at birth, together with infant vaccination, prevents over 95% of new infections that leads to liver cancer in later life. For Hepatitis C, newly available treatment can cure the infection in almost all patients within 12 weeks.

Today, I call on Member States to develop costed, National Strategic Plans to serve as roadmaps for elimination of viral hepatitis. I urge countries to invest in the hepatitis response by scaling up domestic funding, and providing testing and treatment facilities, leveraging on the existing health infrastructure for HIV and other infectious disease.

WHO commends the efforts of the Global Fund in providing testing and treatment for Hepatitis C among patients receiving HIV care, and call on other partners to support the hepatitis response in Africa.

Health care workers, non-governmental organizations, civil society and people living with viral hepatitis must play a vital role in raising awareness and promoting testing and treatment for Hepatitis B and C. I call on researchers to work on simplifying testing and treatment, and find a cure for hepatitis B infection and a vaccine for hepatitis C.

WHO will continue to provide Member States with support and opportunities for regional and international collaboration. We have a vision of an Africa free of viral hepatitis by 2030 and everyone everywhere should have access to testing, diagnosis and treatment.

Now is the time to Test, the time to Treat, and the time to Cure Hepatitis.
Algeria

The Ministry of Health, Population and Hospital Reform launched a detection campaign across the country in July in collaboration with various public health institutions. The week-long campaign culminated in an event at AZ Hotel Palm Beach in Algiers to mark World Hepatitis Day and discuss the campaign’s outcomes. The President of WHA Member Association Nationale SOS Hépatites gave a presentation at the event.

Participation was noted from:
- Baker Laboratories
- National Society for the Control of Hepatitis
- Pasteur Institute
- University Hospital Mustapha Pasha of Algiers

Benin

WHA Member Alliance Beninoise Des Organisations De La Société Civile contre les Hépatites Virales (ABoSCHVi) partnered with the Ministry of Health to deliver a series of events and activities following the adoption of a law to prevent, control and treat hepatitis B and C in Benin. Among the events were a public conference, a local awareness campaign on viral hepatitis in some municipalities, a giant awareness caravan in Kandi commune, a workshop for civil society organisations and media professionals on hepatitis in Benin, and a testing event for 1,000 people at the Stade l’Amitié in Cotonou.

Participation was noted from:
- Jeune Chambre Internationale Universitaire Ouaga Soleil
- L’association Action santé preventive
- L’Association pour la promotion de la femme et de l’enfant
- Yalgado-Ouedraogo University Hospital Center (CHU-YO)

Burkina Faso

WHA Member SOS Hépatites Burkina hosted a press conference to launch the Find the Missing Millions campaign. SOS Hépatites Burkina invited broadcast, print and online media, amplifying their message to the public to get tested and calling on all stakeholders to intensify their efforts in the fight against hepatitis. In addition, they did a number of interviews with media and sent targeted advocacy messages to decision makers urging them to meet the 2020 targets for diagnosis and treatment of viral hepatitis. They also held activities to raise awareness, test and vaccinate against hepatitis at several locations in Ouagadougou. Internationally renowned Burkinabé music artist, Amity Meria, was present for some of the activity.

The Ministry of Health in Koudougou held a commemoration event, which was chaired by the President’s Chief of Staff, Seydou K. Zagré. At the event, it was announced that a caravan would travel across the country’s 13 regions raising awareness and offering free testing. The Ministry of Health also posted about the day on Facebook and the Health Minister, Nicolas Meda, tweeted about the seriousness of the disease.

Participation was noted from:
- Jeune Chambre Internationale Universitaire Ouaga Soleil
- L’association Action santé preventive
- L’Association pour la promotion de la femme et de l’enfant
- Yalgado-Ouedraogo University Hospital Center (CHU-YO)

“It is there to awaken the conscience of the population and political decision-makers. It wakes up the population and the entire community to the threat of viral hepatitis. Association Pour la Lutte Contre les Hepatites Virales (ALHV), Burundi
Burundi

WHO Member
Association pour la Lutte contre les Hépatites Virales (ALHV) conducted outreach at a market in Bujumbura, distributing leaflets and speaking with the public. They also tested staff at Isanganiro Radio while participating in a special broadcast about viral hepatitis. Miss Burundi 2017 was present for the activity.

WHO Burundi published a statement from the WHO Regional Director for Africa, Dr Matshidiso Moeti.

Burundi’s Government circulated a press release highlighting the situation in Africa and Burundi, emphasising the low levels of awareness and diagnosis for hepatitis.

Cameroon

The Minister of Public Health, Mr André Mama Fouda, hosted an official launch ceremony for a month of activities in Cameroon to fight viral hepatitis, which was attended by WHA Member Global Forum for the Defence of the Less Privileged (GFDLP). GFDLP also participated in a planning meeting ahead of the event at the Ministry’s Department for the Control of Disease Epidemics and Pandemics.

WHA Member Positive Generation used infographics to promote World Hepatitis Day on Facebook.

Chad

WHO’s Regional Office for Africa ran a free testing campaign in the Congo to inform and encourage the population to be tested for viral hepatitis and receive treatment early. WHO Africa recommended that the Congo quickly establish a focal point for hepatitis control at the Ministry of Health and a specific programme to fight the disease.
### Ethiopia

The Ministry of Health held a press conference with patient associations and community representatives at St. Paul’s Hospital MM College in Addis Ababa. It distributed a press release detailing the national strategy for preventing and controlling viral hepatitis by 2030, which it also shared on Facebook and the Ministry of Health website.

WHO Country Office in Ethiopia marked the day on Twitter.

**Participation was noted from:**
- SOS Hepatites Côte d’Ivoire
- La Plate Forme d’Ong Village de la Santé (PNLCHV)

### Ghana

The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and WHO Country Office in Ghana organised a symposium at Westfield Youth Monument for stakeholders to meet and discuss how to realise the elimination of viral hepatitis by 2030. The Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Muhammed Lamin Jaiteh, gave a speech about the importance of World Hepatitis Day, highlighting what needs to be done to promote prevention, diagnosis and treatment of the disease. The WHO Country Representative spoke about the need to scale up testing and treatment. Testing of 100 people was carried out. WHA Member Hope Life International and other civil society organisations also participated in the commemoration.

**Participation was noted from:**
- Medical Research Council, Gambia

### Côte d’Ivoire

The Ministry of Health held a press conference with patient associations and community representatives at St. Paul’s Hospital MM College in Addis Ababa. It distributed a press release detailing the national strategy for preventing and controlling viral hepatitis by 2030, which it also shared on Facebook and the Ministry of Health website.

WHO Country Office in Côte d’Ivoire marked the day on Twitter.

**Participation was noted from:**
- SOS Hepatites Côte d’Ivoire
- La Plate Forme d’Ong Village de la Santé (PNLCHV)

### Gambia

The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and WHO Country Office in Gambia organised a symposium at Westfield Youth Monument for stakeholders to meet and discuss how to realise the elimination of viral hepatitis by 2030. The Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Muhammed Lamin Jaiteh, gave a speech about the importance of World Hepatitis Day, highlighting what needs to be done to promote prevention, diagnosis and treatment of the disease. The WHO Country Representative spoke about the need to scale up testing and treatment. Testing of 100 people was carried out. WHA Member Hope Life International and other civil society organisations also participated in the commemoration.

**Participation was noted from:**
- Medical Research Council, Gambia

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**“WHD is very important because it creates a powerful wind of influence, especially with the public, development partners and policy makers. It’s a day when health experts and civil society unify their voices against viral hepatitis.”**

-Trinity Healthcare Foundation, Nigeria

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Guinea

Guinea's Minister-Health Adviser to the President re-tweeted WHO Director General, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

The President of WHA Member SOS Hépatites Guinea, Dr Abdourahmane N’diouria Diallo, gave commentary and interviews with a variety of online and broadcast outlets. This led to an influx of enquiries and enquires at their offices from people concerned about their status.

In addition, they organised an educational initiative for pregnant women on hepatitis in Sogakope District Hospital, South Tongu. These women were tested for hepatitis C and hepatitis B, treatment was provided for positive mothers. Finally, Long Life Africa participated in a week-long radio campaign about hepatitis in the South Tongu district and Executive Director, Atakli Alex, wrote an op-ed for News Ghana calling on national leaders, WHO and the UN to “wake up” to the dangers presented by the hepatitis pandemic.

Participation was noted from:
- Hepatitis Alliance of Ghana
- Kaiser Global Health Limited
- MDS-Lancet Laboratories

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Ghana

an unprecedented rate for the event.

WHA Members Hepatitis Foundation of Ghana and Hepatitis Coalition of Ghana also organised a free testing and vaccination event at Kasoa New Market. The Foundation held regular meetings with Kamebre Downtown Assembly and Municipal Health Directorate prior to the event and, as a result, received strong support from the Municipal Assembly and Health Directorate, as well as other event stakeholders. T-shirts with the message ‘Find the Missing Millions’ were provided to staff and volunteers and Liebherr donated three refrigerators for vaccinations.

Hepatitis Foundation of Ghana President, Theobold Owusu-Ansah, gave several broadcast interviews to TV and radio outlets. He also had an op-ed published by Modern Ghana where he called for the government to increase activities to eliminate hepatitis.

WHA Member Save Your Liver Foundation (SYLF) and Ghana Health Service launched a fund, the Ghana Liver Hepatitis Fund, aiming to enable ten regions to implement programmes in line with the National Policy Guideline on Viral Hepatitis to help curb the disease. A WHO representative, Felicia Owusu Antwi, also spoke at the event.

WHA Member Long Life Africa launched research findings on hepatitis, which revealed a prevalence of 14% infection rate among senior high students at Krachi Senior High School. The findings were published by the Public Health University of Ghana and were sent to the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education with an appeal to organise hepatitis B awareness, testing and vaccination drives in all senior high schools. Long Life Africa also advocated to the President to remove taxes on the importation of all hepatitis B vaccination and treatment products.

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Participation was noted from:
- Hepatitis Alliance of Ghana
- Kaiser Global Health Limited
- MDS-Lancet Laboratories

(continued from previous page)
Mauritius

The National Institute of Hepatology and Virology held a commemoration event hosted by the Minister of Health who explained that uptake in patients has increased from 25% to 75% due to the efforts of the Institute, and that the country intends to eradicate the disease within the set deadlines. The WHO Acting Country Representative read the WHO Regional Director’s World Hepatitis Day message.

Mauritania

The National Institute of Hepatology and Virology held a commemoration event hosted by the Minister of Health who explained that uptake in patients has increased from 25% to 75% due to the efforts of the Institute, and that the country intends to eradicate the disease within the set deadlines. The WHO Acting Country Representative read the WHO Regional Director’s World Hepatitis Day message.

Lesotho

The National AIDS and STI Control Programme (NASCOP) at the Ministry of Health held a press conference at the Nairobi Hospital Anderson Medical Center on viral hepatitis ahead of World Hepatitis Day, which it promoted on social media using the Find the Missing Millions campaign hashtag. NASCOP also organised a walk from Ngara to Mathare Hospital Grounds, during which people were tested and vaccinated at mobile clinics along the route. Hepatitis patients also gave testimonies during the event and counselling services were provided.

WHO Country Office in Kenya promoted World Hepatitis Day on Twitter.

WHO Country Representative, Dr Cornelia Atsyor, gave an interview with Lesotho Times on the topic of the urgent need for data to diagnose, prevent and treat hepatitis in Lesotho.

Kenya

The National AIDS and STI Control Programme (NASCOP) at the Ministry of Health held a press conference at the Nairobi Hospital Anderson Medical Center on viral hepatitis ahead of World Hepatitis Day, which it promoted on social media using the Find the Missing Millions campaign hashtag. NASCOP also organised a walk from Ngara to Mathare Hospital Grounds, during which people were tested and vaccinated at mobile clinics along the route. Hepatitis patients also gave testimonies during the event and counselling services were provided.

WHO Country Office in Kenya promoted World Hepatitis Day on Twitter.

WHO Country Representative, Dr Cornelia Atsyor, gave an interview with Lesotho Times on the topic of the urgent need for data to diagnose, prevent and treat hepatitis in Lesotho.

Madagascar

The National Institute of Hepatology and Virology held a commemoration event hosted by the Minister of Health who explained that uptake in patients has increased from 25% to 75% due to the efforts of the Institute, and that the country intends to eradicate the disease within the set deadlines. The WHO Acting Country Representative read the WHO Regional Director’s World Hepatitis Day message.

WHO Member HepSupport held a free testing event for hepatitis B and C, in addition to testing for other health conditions and consultations with doctors. They distributed flyers and put banners and posters up around Vacoas town to promote the event. They also gave interviews with radio outlets on hepatitis awareness, testing and treatment.

Following activities for World Hepatitis Day, the government announced that doctors would receive training in hepatology from foreign specialists later in the year.

Participation was noted from:
- Green Cross Medical Laboratory
- Haemophilia Society
- Poly Consult
- Soza Health
- Thalassemia Society
Niger's First Lady, Aïssata Issoufou, in her role as President of the Guri Vie Meilleur Foundation, organised a caravan to conduct awareness-raising and testing for viral hepatitis in five communes in Niamey. The testing drive began on World Hepatitis Day and continued over the following week. The Minister of Public Health, Dr Idi Illiasou Mainassara, also attended the launch event and spoke about the lack of data for hepatitis prevalence in the country and the government’s commitment to providing the necessary resources to stakeholders.

Participation was noted from:
- National Hospital, Niamey

WHO Acting Country Representative, Dr Rex Mpazanje, reassured Nigerians that affordable medicines are now available to control hepatitis B infection and cure hepatitis C and commended the Government for having a strategic plan to eliminate the disease.

Beacon Youth Initiative (BYI) held an awareness rally from the Nasarawa State Ministry of Health to Bukan Hari. A public address system with jingles on viral hepatitis was used to alert the public to the march. Materials such as flyers, banners and stickers were distributed. Following the march, a testing event was held and BYI’s Executive Director, Envoh Emmanuel Okolo, and the Director of Public Health at Nasarawa State Ministry of Health both gave speeches in which they discussed the Find the Missing Millions theme and urged everyone present to get tested. Due to BYI’s advocacy efforts over recent years, this was the first World Hepatitis Day event that Nasarawa State Ministry of Health commemorated with BYI and partners.

Elohim Foundation held a march through Wuse Market in Abuja to LEA primary school attended by staff from the Federal Ministry of Health, WHO and civil society organisations. World Hepatitis Day flyers, signs and banners were disseminated and the event was covered by Africa Independence Television (AIT) and print news media. Following the march, the Elohim Foundation’s Executive Director (continued on next page).
delivered a lecture on hepatitis at LEA primary school in Mabushi. The lecture included information on the various types of hepatitis, methods of transmission, common signs and symptoms, and prevention, treatment and vaccination. Free testing for hepatitis B and C was then provided to all participants.

Trinity Healthcare Foundation (THCF) also organised an awareness march around the streets of Uyo Metropolis, which used the Find the Missing Millions theme. After the rally, THCF Founder, Dr Ekanem, delivered a lecture and Q&A, which was followed by a testing and vaccination drive. Those who tested positive were given counselling and immediately referred for further medical intervention, and the remaining people were vaccinated. The African Union Youth Ambassador attended the event. THCF tweeted throughout the day, calling on the Nigerian government and health stakeholders to support innovative strategies towards eliminating hepatitis.

LiveWell Initiative and Women in Hepatitis Africa Foundation (WIHA) ran a series of events including an advocacy walk, hepatitis B testing and vaccination event at the Coca Cola Grassroots Stadium in Lagos, a training event for female champions fighting hepatitis, a lecture and Q&A for 60 nurses on viral hepatitis and vaccinations, and an awareness and free testing event at Grange School in Lagos. The Members also tweeted in the lead up to World Hepatitis Day and throughout the day itself.

Viral Hepatitis Association of Nigeria (VHAN) partnered with the Federal University Lokoja Health Services to hold a public lecture and an awareness and testing programme on viral hepatitis. 1,000 Lokoja city residents were tested for hepatitis B and those who had a positive status were referred for appropriate treatment. WHA Members Gammun Center for Care & Development Nigeria, (continued on next page)
Senegal

The Ministry of Health and Social Action hosted an official World Hepatitis Day ceremony in Niakhar town, attended by the Minister, Abdoulaye Diouf Sarr. Following the ceremony, the National Program against Hepatitis (PNLH) conducted training on optimal care for patients in the region with doctors in Fatick. The PNLH highlighted that nearly two million people are carriers of hepatitis B and C in Senegal and that the country urgently needs to train more doctors to care for hepatitis patients.

As part of its World Hepatitis Day programme, WHA Member Saafara Hépatites Sénégal held a pilot event in Ouakam Municipality where they raised awareness about hepatitis and conducted free testing. Saafara Hépatites Sénégal also appeared on Lamp Fall Television and the organisation’s President, Mr Ibrahima Gueye, gave an interview on China Radio International.

Seychelles

Seychelles’ Minister of Health, Jean-Paul Adam, released a statement in which he mentioned the Find the Missing Millions campaign and highlighted the urgent need to find undiagnosed individuals and link them to support and treatment services.

Sierra Leone

Deputy Speaker of Parliament, the Honourable Chernor Maju Bah, attended an awareness-raising and vaccination event organised by civil society organisation We Give All, during which he urged everyone to commit themselves to increasing public awareness of hepatitis.

South Africa

Both the Ministry of Health and the South African Government marked the day on social media. The South African Government posted a Find the Missing Millions graphic on Facebook.

Participation was noted from:
- Department of Health, City of Cape Town
- Department of Health, Gauteng Province
- South African Medical Association
- TB/HIV Care Association
- University of South Africa (UNISA)

Togo

Participation was noted from:
- Nouvelle Formule Sanitaire (NFS Togo)
United Republic of Tanzania

The Ministry of Health, Social Development, Gender, Elderly and Children reiterated the Government’s commitment to vaccinating against hepatitis B, particularly the groups most at risk from contracting the disease.

Participation was noted from:
- Aga Khan Hospital
- Tanzania Commission for Aids (TACAIDS)
- Tanzania Pharmaceutical Students’ Association (TAPSA)

Zambia

The Zambia National Public Health Institute published an editorial in Health Press Zambia which reinforced WHO’s call for people to get tested and vaccinated to prevent further hepatitis infections.

Zimbabwe

World Hepatitis Day creates more awareness and helps influence key decision making.

Beacon Youth Initiative, Nigeria

Uganda

The Minister of State for Health, Sarah Opendi, released a statement on the government’s progress in implementing its hepatitis B vaccination programme. The statement details how the Government of Uganda has committed 10 billion shillings annually towards addressing the burden of hepatitis and that more funding is expected to be released for the programme in a phased manner to cover the entire country. The Minister appealed to the public to get tested and know their status and, if they live in a district currently covered by the national program, to ensure they receive the three vaccinations required for immunity.

WHA Member Save Your Liver Foundation shared Find the Missing Millions campaign materials on Facebook.

The National Organisation for People Living with Hepatitis B (NOPLHB) offered free hepatitis B testing and vaccination, providing links to care at Bwera Hospital for those found to have the disease. National Medical Stores provided medical supplies for the event. NOPLHB shared Find the Missing Millions campaign materials on social media and provided updates and images from the event. NOPLHB’s Executive Director, Kenneth Kabagambe, appeared on Urban Television to discuss efforts to Find the Missing Millions living with chronic hepatitis B in Uganda.

World Hepatitis Day mobilises all states, all social partners, all patients and all health providers to coordinate activities that can help to eradicate viral hepatitis by 2030.

SOS Hepatites Guinea, Guinea

World Hepatitis Day enables us to enhance the attainment of elimination as all hands will be on deck and measurable outcomes can be garnered.

LiveWell Initiative, Nigeria
One of the main problems with viral hepatitis is that people don’t know about it or don’t want to talk about it. To have a day every year when you hear about it on TV, in newspapers, and people talk about it on social media is a really valuable tool to towards elimination.

FundHepa, Mexico

**Participation statistics**

- **27 countries** participating
- **77%** of region participating
- **14 governments** participating
- **1,990 people tested**
- **6,404 people attended events**
- **181 people vaccinated**

*Where reported, numbers likely to be higher

**Findings by country for WHA Members, national governments and WHO Country Offices**

1. Antigua and Barbuda
2. Argentina
3. Bahamas
4. Barbados
5. Belize
6. Bolivia
7. Brasil
8. Canada
9. Chile
10. Colombia
11. Costa Rica
12. Cuba
13. Dominica
14. Dominican Republic
15. Ecuador
16. El Salvador
17. Grenada
18. Guatemala
19. Guyana
20. Haiti
21. Honduras
22. Jamaica
23. Mexico
24. Nicaragua
25. Panama
26. Paraguay
27. Peru
28. Saint Kitts and Nevis
29. Saint Lucia
30. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
31. Suriname
32. Trinidad and Tobago
33. United States of America
34. Uruguay
35. Venezuela

*No participation recorded
In the run-up to World Hepatitis Day on July 28, 2018, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) is calling on countries in the Americas to urgently step-up efforts to ensure the timely diagnosis and treatment of hepatitis.

Hepatitis B and C affect 325 million people globally, resulting in 1.34 million deaths each year. In the region of the Americas, 3.9 million people live with chronic hepatitis B and 7.2 million with chronic hepatitis C, leading to over 125,000 deaths each year. Liver cancer is the 4th leading cause of cancer-related deaths among men and the 7th leading cause of cancer-related deaths among women in the Americas, posing a major public health problem.

Despite clear links between chronic hepatitis B and C and potentially fatal diseases such as cirrhosis and liver cancer, not enough is being done in the region to ensure prevention, detection and treatment.

"While some countries in the region have made great strides towards addressing the risks to public health posed by hepatitis, many others continue to lag behind," said Marcos Espinal, Director, Communicable Diseases and Environmental Determinants of Health, at PAHO/WHO. "We know that treating hepatitis C can lead to around a 75% reduction in the risk of developing liver cancer, yet just 14% of those with hepatitis C in Latin America and the Caribbean are diagnosed, and less than 1% receive life-saving treatment."

**AMERICAS**

**Press release from WHO Regional Office for the Americas region**

**World Hepatitis Day 2018**

The theme of this year’s World Hepatitis Day is “Time to test. Time to treat. Time to cure.” The day will focus on promoting three primary objectives:

- To support the urgent scale-up of hepatitis prevention, testing, treatment and care services
- To showcase best practices and promote universal health coverage of hepatitis services
- To improve partnerships and funding in the fight against viral hepatitis

To mark the occasion and ensure that countries are best equipped to tackle the issue, the World Health Organization (WHO) has released new guidance on the treatment of hepatitis C, calling for an expansion of access to innovative curative treatments to all those over the age of 12 living with the virus, and the inclusion of effective hepatitis B and C treatment in national health insurance systems.

**Hepatitis in the Americas**

During 2015 and 2016, Ministers of health from throughout the Americas agreed on a series of actions to reduce the public health burden of hepatitis and eliminate hepatitis as a public health problem by 2030. Since then, efforts to ensure vaccination against hepatitis B have continued, with all countries in Latin America and the Caribbean vaccinating children under 1 year of age, 22 of which do so within the first 24 hours following birth, in accordance with recommendations from WHO.

However, when it comes to the treatment of those living with chronic hepatitis C, much remains to be done. New advances mean that over 95% of those infected could indeed be cured, yet across the region, the vast majority of people living with hepatitis C do not have affordable access to these highly effective medicines. Treating the virus with directly acting antiviral (DAA) drugs, for example, can cure hepatitis C in less than three months.

Few countries of the region have accessed lower priced DAAs for hepatitis C through the PAHO Strategic Fund, which enables them to pool resources in order to access affordable, strategic and quality assured medicines. "It is vital that other countries make the most of this initiative, while also developing testing, treatment and elimination plans to reduce the high burden of healthcare costs associated with late diagnosis, liver cancer and cirrhosis, and most importantly, to save lives," said Espinal. "We know that government efforts to increase the availability of treatments have a huge impact on reducing the number of those suffering from chronic hepatitis and related liver disease," said Espinal. In Brazil, for example, in 2017 the Ministry of Health set the goal of eliminating hepatitis C, and DAA drugs have been made available through the National health system.

**Hepatitis**

Hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver, most commonly caused by a viral infection by one of the five main hepatitis viruses (types A, B, C, D and E). It can result in acute infections and lead to chronic liver disease, cirrhosis, cancer or even death. Hepatitis B and C infections are transmitted through contaminated blood as well as through contaminated needles and syringes and among people who inject drugs. The viruses can also be transmitted through unsafe sex and from an infected mother to her newborn child.

Hepatitis B and C are chronic infections that can remain asymptomatic for long periods of time, often for years. The good news is that early testing and treatment prevents the complications of hepatitis C. Thanks to advances in treatment, new medicines can cure hepatitis C in just three months or less. The updated guidance from WHO calls for all adults, and children over 12 years, living with hepatitis C to be treated with these new drugs.
Antigua and Barbuda

Chief Medical Officer at the Ministry of Health and the Environment, Dr Rhonda Sealey-Thomas, urged the public to vaccinate themselves against hepatitis. Dr Sealey-Thomas’ comments were in response to a call from the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) for Antigua and Barbuda, and other Caribbean countries, to provide curative treatment for hepatitis and reduce thousands of preventable deaths in the Americas every year.

Argentina

The Ministry of Public Health organised testing and vaccination events for the general public at Plaza 25 de Mayo and Parque de la Democracia in Buenos Aires city.

WHA Member Fundación HCV Sin Fronteras coordinated World Hepatitis Day across Argentina and ran the official country website for the day that included a calendar of events throughout Argentina and downloadable brochures, banners, posters and graphics. They also held and planned their own series of activities under the Find the Missing Millions campaign theme. Fundación HCV Sin Fronteras partnered with the National Hepatitis Programme at the Ministry of Public Health, and other stakeholders, to deliver an event in Plaza Once, Buenos Aires, during which they conducted rapid testing for hepatitis B and C, and provided information and vaccinations. They also held testing and vaccination events for the public in Mar del Plata and Pinamar in Buenos Aires Province.

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Argentina

Hepatitis Rosario delivered two workshops on World Hepatitis Day to students in their final year of secondary school and to the public in San Jose de la Esquina. The workshops focused on educating participants about viral hepatitis and the need to get tested and vaccinated. The students were also given surveys to take home to their families to identify their risk of infection. Other schools in the city of Rosario were then invited to register to attend a workshop. Universidad Nacional de Rosario (UNR) supported the development of the workshops, with UNR medical students contributing to workshop topics and content.

Participation was noted from:
- Aguilares Hospital, Tucumán Province
- AIDS Coordination Buenos Aires
- Ammar (Association of Women Mediatrix of Argentina)
- Área de Diversidad Afectiva Sexual de la Secretaría de Derechos Humanos
- Argentina Association for the Study of Liver Diseases
- ATTTA (Association of Transvestites, Transsexuals and Transgender of Argentina)
- Buena Vida Association
- Center for Medical Specialties (CEMA)
- Cine LGBT Santa Fe
- DICEI
- Divas (Diversity Valiente Santiagueña)
- Evita Hospital, La Pampa Province
- Falhepvir
- Hospital Centenario de Rosario, Santa Fe Province
- Hospital Posadas, Buenos Aires Province
- Hospital Señor del Milagro, Salta Province
- Lucio Molas Hospital, La Pampa Province
- Malbran-ANLIS (Administración Nacional de Laboratorios e Institutos de Salud)
- Medical Center of Mar del Plata
- Ministry of Public Health, Chubut Province
- Ministry of Public Health, Corrientes Province
- Ministry of Public Health, La Pampa Province
- Ministry of Public Health, Misiones
- Ministry of Public Health, Municipality of Banda
- Ministry of Public Health, San Juan Province
- Ministry of Public Health, Santa Fe Province
- Ministry of Public Health, Tierra del Fuego Province
- Municipality of Escobar
- Municipality of Esquel
- Municipality of General Pueyrredon
- Municipality of Gualeguay
- Municipality of Neuquén

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Bahamas

WHO Country Office in the Bahamas tweeted about the day.

Barbados

Participation was noted from:
- The Washington University of Barbados

Argentina

- Municipality of Santa Fe
- National Immunization Program
- Nokanchis
- Padilla Hospital, Tucumán Province
- RAP + 30, Adult Network Positives
- San Bernardo Hospital, Salta Province
- Sayani Caligua Foundation
- Subsecretaría de Diversidad Sexual, Santa Fe Province
- Unidad Centinela de Hepatitis Virales, City of Santa Fe
- University of Chubut
- Zonal Hospital

Bolivia

The Ministry of Health marked the day on Facebook and Twitter, sharing graphics and facts about viral hepatitis.

WHO Country Office in Bolivia published a statement on its website. WHO Bolivia also posted extensively on Twitter and Facebook with updates from the region on World Hepatitis Day events, and used its social media channels to call on governments in the region to provide all populations with access to testing and treatment.

Brazil

The Ministry of Health announced its intention to launch a plan to eliminate hepatitis C by 2030, offering treatment to 19,000 people this year and scaling up to 50,000 people a year from 2019 onwards. The Ministry also posted on Facebook and Twitter sharing updates from the region on World Hepatitis Day events, and used its social media channels to call on governments in the region to provide all populations with access to testing and treatment.

WHO Country Office in Brazil shared a statement on its website about increasing access to treatment for hepatitis in the Americas and promoted the day on Facebook and Twitter.

WHA Member Zero Hepatite organised a testing campaign across multiple States including São Paulo, Santa Catarina, Rio Grande do Sul, Mato Grosso do Sul, Minas Gerais, and Bahia. The testing campaign received a spread of online and broadcast media coverage

World Hepatitis Day is an opportunity to raise awareness about the disease, the stigma and opportunities to seek diagnosis and treatment.

Asociacion Guatemalteca del Higado, Guatemala
Brazil

WHA Member
Grupo Otimismo

WHA Country
Office

Advocacy
Awareness
Education
Media Coverage
Policy
Testing

in outlets including SPTV, Jornal Hoje, Jornal Nacional, Globo News, and Jovem Pan News.

WHA Member Grupo Otimismo wrote a letter to the Minister of Health regarding the government’s decision to reduce the 2018 target for the number of people diagnosed and treated for hepatitis, under its plan to eliminate hepatitis C.

Participation was noted from:
- 327 municipalities, State of São Paulo
- Municipality of Bom Retiro Do Sul, Rio Grande do Sul State
- University of Campinos

Canada

WHA Member
Action Hepatitis Canada (AHC)

WHA Country
Office

Advocacy
Awareness
Education
Media Coverage
Policy
Testing

WHA Member Action Hepatitis Canada (AHC) launched their Speak Up letter writing campaign in the run up to World Hepatitis Day, mobilising Canadians to send their Minister of Health and MPP/MLA a letter urging them to create an Implementation Plan in each province and territory to eliminate hepatitis. AHC also used social media to share their campaign and raise awareness about World Hepatitis Day.

The Public Health Agency of Canada posted on Facebook, urging Canadians to contact their local health service to get tested. The Public Health Agency’s Chief Public Health Officer, Dr Theresa Tam, shared information about hepatitis on Twitter. A message from the Minister of Health detailing the actions taken by Canada’s Government in the fight against hepatitis was also published on the Government’s website. Member of Parliament for Spadina – Fort York, Adam Vaughan, shared the Minister of Health’s World Hepatitis Day message on Facebook and urged people to get tested and seek treatment.

Hépatites Ressources held a press conference to mark World Hepatitis Day and officially open their new premises, the Hepatitis Resources Community Clinic, providing much needed support to fight hepatitis in Quebec.

Centre Associatif Polyvalent D’Aide Hépatite C (CAPAHC) shared information about AHC’s Speak Up campaign on Facebook, as well as the importance of getting tested for hepatitis.

Pacific Hepatitis C Network (PHCN) President, Daryl Luster’s op-ed was published in the Vancouver Sun and he also released a statement for World Hepatitis Day, posted on PHCN’s website. PHCN produced a YouTube video about the stigma surrounding hepatitis C. Daryl Luster called on the Government of British Columbia to focus on developing a comprehensive and immediate hepatitis C screening strategy, based on the new testing guidelines released by the Canadian Association for the Study of the Liver.
Canada

Hepatitis Outreach Society of Nova Scotia held an awareness raising event at Open House, where they handed out information about hepatitis to attendees. They also marked the day on social media.

Ontario Hepatitis C Treatment Program / Access Aids Network shared Find the Missing Millions campaign materials on Facebook in addition to an infographic depicting what needs to be done to achieve the elimination of hepatitis C in Canada.

WHA member the Canadian Society for International Health (CSIH) organized the World Hepatitis Day Art Contest for federal inmates. The goal was to increase awareness about hepatitis and encourage inmates to learn their hepatitis status by getting tested. This year, the Art Contest theme is “Finding the Missing Millions: Breaking barriers to diagnosis” CSIH received 60 posters from more than 15 correctional institutions.

HepCBC promoted World Hepatitis Day on their website and social media channels, and shared sample social media posts to encourage others to spread the message. Canadian AIDS Society showed support for World Hepatitis Day on social media and Sidaction Maurice shared Find the Missing Millions materials on Facebook.

Participation was noted from:
- Access Place and the Gate
- AIDS Community Care Montreal
- AIDS Vancouver Island
- Ally Centre
- British Columbia Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS
- Bureau de Sante Middlesex-London Health Unit
- Canadian Association of Hepatology Nurses
- CanHepC – Canadian Network on Hepatitis C
- Clinique I.D.
- Elevate NWO
- HepNet
- HIV North
- Horizon Health Network

Chile

The Ministry of Health held a breakfast event, which was attended by WHO Country Office in Chile and WHA Member FupaHep. Patients who had been cured of hepatitis C after receiving treatment with new antiviral therapies shared their experiences. Clinical teams and medical experts from several Chilean hospitals and universities also attended the breakfast. Dr Paloma Cuchi, Representative for WHO Chile, gave a welcome speech.

The Ministry of Health promoted World Hepatitis Day on social media and shared tips on preventing hepatitis using a range of informational graphics.

WHO Chile also marked the day on Twitter.

Participation was noted from:
- Cesfam Huequen de Angol
- Chillán Clinic, Ñuble
- Dr Hernan Henriquez Aravena Hospital
- Hospital Dr Sotero Del Rio
- Ñuble Health Service
- Provincial Office of the Seraía de Salud Aconcagua
- Seremi de Salud, Alejandro Garcia
- Seremi de Salud, Araucania Norte and Sur Health Services
- Seremi de Salud, Ñuble

"One of the main problems with viral hepatitis is that people don’t know about it or don’t want to talk about it, and to have a day every year when you hear about it on TV, in newspapers, and people talk about it on social media is a really valuable tool to towards elimination."

FundHepa, Mexico
Colombia

The Ministry of Health and Social Protection included information on the global and national hepatitis situation, and on World Hepatitis Day, in its newsletter where it also mentioned the Find the Missing Millions campaign and used the campaign imagery. The Ministry also tweeted about the day.

WHA Member Asociacion Norte Santandereana de Hepatitis Virales contributed to a radio programme that was broadcast to the city of Cúcuta, raising awareness on the topic of viral hepatitis and World Hepatitis Day. They also participated in a national commemoration organised by WHO Country Office in Columbia and the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, during which new targets and activities for the elimination of viral hepatitis in Colombia were announced.

WHO Columbia posted a short article on its website about the importance of World Hepatitis Day activities.

 Participation was noted from:
- Grupo de Gastrohepatología, University of Antioquia
- Municipality of Pamplona
- University of Caldas

Costa Rica

WHO Country Office in Costa Rica promoted World Hepatitis Day on Facebook.

Cuba

The Ministry of Public Health shared information about viral hepatitis on Facebook.

Dominican Republic

The Ministry of Public Health produced and launched a new guide for World Hepatitis Day, aimed at those with responsibility for service users affected by viral hepatitis and HIV. The Ministry also joined in the celebration on Facebook.

Participation was noted from:
- The Foundation of Patients with Hepatitis B, C and other Immunological Diseases in the Dominican Republic (FUNPAHEINM)
- Sociedad Dominicana De Gastroenterologia

World Hepatitis Day is important because it serves as a designated day to raise awareness and educate people about viral hepatitis. 9 of 10 people living with viral hepatitis around the globe don’t even know they have it. Days like this are vital for organizations all across the world to come together and share the message.

American Liver Foundation, USA
The Ministry of Public Health and WHO Country Office in Ecuador held an event to commemorate World Hepatitis Day. Both organisations also tweeted facts about the disease and the treatment available.

Participation was noted from:
- Unidad de Bienestar Estudiantil y Politécnico
- Sigchos Hospital

WHO Country Office in El Salvador tweeted a video and message about the current gap in testing and treatment for hepatitis.

WHO Country Office in Guatemala tweeted a video and message about the current gap in testing and treatment for hepatitis.

Barrenche, PAHO/WHO Representative in Guatemala were in attendance. Dr Patricia Vélez Möller, President of WHA Member, Asociación Guatemalteca del Higado and WHA Regional Adviser for the Americas spoke about the meaning and history of World Hepatitis Day. Dr Gerardo Arroyo, Representative of the Rector of the University of San Carlos De Guatemala (USAC) and Dr Héctor Fong, President of the College of Doctors and Surgeons of Guatemala were also on the panel. Dr. Giovany Franco, Coordinator for Continuing Medical Education at Medical School of the University of San Carlos, was the Master of Ceremonies.

During the event, a World Hepatitis Day video message from Michael Ninburg, WHA President, was shown to the audience. A patient then gave a testimony about his journey through diagnosis, treatment and cure of hepatitis. Health professionals from the national health programmes of the Ministry of Health, Social Security Institute and Military Hospital, responsible for the implementation of the national plan for hepatitis elimination, were then presented with certificates for their participation in a Hepatitis C Update Course given by Medical School of San Carlos University.

Pamphlets about hepatitis C, a Guatemalan science journal with articles about hepatitis B and C, and a button pin with Eliminate Hepatitis and Find the Missing Millions messages were distributed to the audience.

PAHO/WHO Guatemala shared the WHO Regional Office for the Americas’ official World Hepatitis Day statement on its website and also posted about the day on Facebook.

Asociación Guatemalteca del Higado ran a testing campaign over three days, offering free hepatitis B and C testing in eight private laboratories and at the offices of an LGBT civil society organisation. (continued on next page)
Guatemala

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People who tested positive for hepatitis were linked to appropriate care. Each facility displayed Find the Missing Millions campaign banners and posters. They also partnered with the Medical School of San Carlos University and the Medical Association to deliver two lectures for doctors about advancements in the treatment of hepatitis C in primary healthcare.

In the lead up to World Hepatitis Day, Asociación Guatemalteca del Hígado also secured interviews for two patients with a radio programme about their experiences of living with hepatitis C. An article about viral hepatitis based on an interview with Asociación Guatemalteca del Hígado’s President was published in a national newspaper. A representative of the organisation also gave an interview with a morning TV programme where they discussed hepatitis B and C and invited viewers to get tested.

Participation was noted from:
- Abesco
- Biolab
- Biotest
- CAS
- Cericap
- Diagnóstico Profesional
- Laboratorio Prados
- Laboratorio San Judas
- Laboratorio Trinidad

Jamaica

WHO Country Office in Jamaica promoted World Hepatitis Day on its website.

Mexico

The Health Secretary, José Narro Robles, gave a statement announcing that public health insurance company, Seguro Popular, would expand its coverage of care to all patients with hepatitis C. José Narro stressed that 1,100 million pesos would be used for patient treatment and care.

WHO Country Office in Mexico shared information on hepatitis and World Hepatitis Day on Facebook and Twitter.

WHA Members FundHepa, Hepatos Aion Foundation, AC and Grupo De Autoayuda Unidos por una Vida Mejor joined two other NGOs for a press conference to advocate for the incoming government to implement a plan to guarantee hepatitis C control in Mexico.

FundHepa carried out 100 rapid hepatitis C tests with the staff in a small private hospital, and people especially at risk of carrying the disease were invited to take the test. Staff members also gave interviews with radio, TV, online and print media outlets, and the organisation promoted World Hepatitis Day on its social media channels.

Honduras

WHO Country Office in Honduras tweeted informational graphics and awareness-raising messages.

Participation was noted from:
- Island Med Clinic Roatan

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Paraguay

The Ministry of Health published a statement on its website about the current status of hepatitis in Paraguay, and also posted on Facebook.

WHO Country Office in Paraguay tweeted about the day.

Nicaragua

WHO Country Office in Nicaragua shared infographics on Facebook and promoted World Hepatitis Day on its website.

Mexico

Hepatos Aion Foundation, AC held a forum about hepatitis stigma and discrimination at San Lázaro Legislative Palace in Mexico City, the Mexican government headquarters. The event was attended and supported by the Secretary of Mexico’s Health Commission, Teresa Lizárraga. Fundacion Hepatos Aion, AC also received 6,500 point-of-care rapid tests for viral hepatitis C from the World Hepatitis Alliance and InTec Products, an infectious disease diagnostics manufacturer, to be used in testing programmes for at-risk populations in five cities.

WHA Member Grupo De Autoayuda Unidos por una Vida Mejor organised a cycle ride to the Benito Juarez Monument in Mexico City.

Participation was noted from:

- University of Guadalajara
- Asociación Mexicana de Industrias Innovadoras de Dispositivos Médicos
- Asociación Mexicana de Hepatología
- IMSS

Panama

WHO Country Office in Panama shared infographics on Facebook and promoted World Hepatitis Day on its website.

Peru

WHO Country Office in Peru raised awareness about hepatitis on Twitter.

Participation was noted from:

- Guillermo Almenara Irigoyen Hospital – EsSalud

Saint Lucia

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The Ministry of Health joined in the commemoration on Facebook and Twitter, highlighting the need for everyone over the age of 40 to get tested.

The United States Department of Health and Human Services posted a blog on the HIV.gov website about viral hepatitis prevalence in the USA among those infected with HIV. The blog cited the Find the Missing Millions campaign and used the campaign logo. The Department also tweeted about World Hepatitis Day, sharing a quiz from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) about hepatitis.

The American Liver Foundation (ALF) collaborated with Enanta Pharmaceuticals and Nasdaq to display the Find the Missing Millions campaign message in Times Square, New York City. A number of ALF Divisions across the United States also organised activities for World Hepatitis Day. ALF Texas Division held a free testing event for hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and HIV in Houston, and staff also attended a health fair in Dallas to distribute information on viral hepatitis.

ALF Greater Los Angeles Division organised an ‘Ask the Experts’ and hepatitis C testing event where doctors from St Vincent Medical Center, University of Southern California, and the Cedars-Sinai Comprehensive Liver Transplant Center were on hand to answer questions from attendees about the disease. They also held a ‘Liver Life Walk’ where testing for hepatitis C was offered. ALF Upper

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Midwest Division also held a ‘Liver Life Walk’ in Wisconsin to raise awareness about the day.

ALF Connecticut partnered with the Greater Bridgeport Area Prevention Program (GBAPP) to deliver a hepatitis C testing event, which saw representation from 14 healthcare organisations. A representative of ALF New England participated in the Water Fire community event in Providence, Rhode Island as one of 100 torchbearers in boats along the river. Festival Ballet Providence and drummers Gendo Taiko also performed. The Executive Director of ALF’s Pacific Coast Division, Scott Suckow, gave a television interview with KUSI Channel 9 alongside Dr Rohit Loomba from the University of California on ‘the A, B, C’s of viral hepatitis’.

ALF Rocky Mountain Division attended the Dragon Boat Festival in Denver, Colorado where they handed out leaflets on hepatitis to the local community. ALF Greater Lakes Division, Northern California Division, and Greater New York Division all raised awareness on social media.

The Hepatitis B Foundation organised the annual Hep B United Summit, which was convened in Washington D.C. During the Summit, national and local partners, representatives of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, CDC, and other stakeholders, met to discuss how to increase hepatitis B testing and vaccination, and improve access to treatment and care for people with hepatitis B. A number of the sessions were broadcast on Facebook Live. Hepatitis B Foundation also produced a vox pop video, asking people around the world “Why should people get tested for hepatitis B?”

HBI-Minnesota held a testing event at St. Adalbert’s Church and also attended the Hep B United Summit in Washington D.C.

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Uruguay

WHA Member APAHE organised a series of educational teleconferences for medical professionals on hepatitis B and C, and non-alcoholic fatty liver disease. They held awareness raising activities at the Hospital de Clínicas “Dr. Manuel Quintela” and at Geant Shopping Centre in Montevideo. They also partnered with Asociación de Trasplantados del Uruguay (ATUR) to deliver an event at Villa Blarritz Fair, during which they distributed literature on hepatitis. APAHE promoted the Find the Missing Millions Thunderclap on Facebook.

Asociacion Comunidad Hepatitis C (ACHC) met Uruguay’s Parliamentary Commissioner for the Penitentiary System,
Uruguay

Dr Juan Miguel Petit, to urge him to scale up testing and treatment among the country’s prison population. ACHC followed up by writing a letter to the Commissioner, reiterating their key points and demands from the meeting. ACHC also shared video content on Facebook to raise awareness about hepatitis.

WHO Country Office in Uruguay tweeted informational graphics and amplified WHO Regional Office for the Americas’ call to increase access to hepatitis treatment.

Participation was noted from:
- Asociación de Trasplantados del Uruguay (ATUR)
- Society of Gastroenterology Uruguay

Venezuela

The Ministry of Health published a press release about World Hepatitis Day on its website.

WHA Member Hepatitis C Venezuela held an event at Plaza la Castellana in Caracas to mark the day, during which people participated in sports activities. Hepatitis C Venezuela called on its network to donate to those unable to afford vital hepatitis C medication. An awareness rally also took place, congregating outside the WHO Country Office building.

Participation was noted from:
- Amnesty International Venezuela

“On July 28, hepatitis does not go unnoticed. It’s a day where we emphasize the work of many organizations, the efforts of governments and try to increase awareness and education with the actions we undertake.

Asociacion Norte Santandereana de Hepatitis Virales, Colombia

“With global media attention, World Hepatitis Day is the best opportunity we have to raise awareness of this silent killer.

APAHE, Uruguay

“World Hepatitis Day provides an opportunity to mobilize awareness and hopefully generate new local champions to help with the work!

Hep Free Hawaii, USA

“World Hepatitis Day is another tool that allows us to raise awareness and report viral hepatitis to all sectors of society. This awareness allows us to advance strategies that lead us towards elimination.

Fundacion HCV Sin Fronteras, Argentina
World Hepatitis Day is the culmination of year-long initiatives, when communities join forces and engage in actions big and small to ask for better access to diagnosis and treatments, and generally try to effect change. It is also the day when some individual governments announce the actions and strategies they are taking to fight the disease.

Zhwandoon Welfare Organization, Pakistan
Message from WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean region, Dr Ahmed Al-Mandhari

World Hepatitis Day has become an important annual occasion. It reminds us of our global commitment to combat viral hepatitis as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The WHO Global Health Sector Strategy on Viral Hepatitis elaborates on Sustainable Development Goal 3 and calls for the elimination of viral hepatitis by 2030. Moving towards this goal will require concerted efforts. The key step to achieve elimination is to find those people who are undiagnosed and link them to care and treatment, and so the global strategy calls for a major increase in the diagnosis of chronic viral B and C hepatitis infection.

Viral hepatitis remains a considerable public health threat in the Eastern Mediterranean, with almost 36 million people chronically infected with either hepatitis B or C (15 million with hepatitis C and 21 million with hepatitis B). Our Region has the highest hepatitis C prevalence in the world, at 2.3%, and is the third worst affected region for hepatitis B, at 3.3%.

Yet notwithstanding the huge burden of the disease in our Region, countries have made significant progress in combating viral hepatitis. Egypt is setting a good example in moving towards elimination by scaling up its testing activities, finding millions of hepatitis C patients and providing them with treatment. Pakistan has developed its national strategy and successfully secured very low drug prices for hepatitis C treatment. Other countries, such as Morocco, are also investing in strengthening their hepatitis programmes; Morocco has announced a plan to eliminate hepatitis C by 2030.

The Region has also made great progress towards achieving the regional hepatitis B reduction goal. Average coverage with the third dose of hepatitis B vaccine in the Region exceeded 80% in 2017, and 14 countries have achieved the target of 90% coverage. Additionally, 17 countries in our Region are successfully implementing the hepatitis B birth dose. Available data indicate that many countries are on track to achieve the regional hepatitis B reduction goal.

Despite this commendable work by Member States, we still face many obstacles and challenges. Only one in four people infected with hepatitis C and one in 50 infected with hepatitis B are aware of their infection, preventing them from accessing life-saving treatment. Several countries in the Region do not have testing policies in place. In addition to poor infection control practices and limited awareness of the disease, a lack of easily accessible testing services in most countries remains a key challenge that hinders our ability to prevent and control viral hepatitis.

Without tackling the huge gap in diagnosis, people living with viral hepatitis will not get the chance to seek treatment and live healthier lives. Untreated chronic infection may lead to liver disease, cirrhosis and liver cancer. Current technological advances have improved access to hepatitis testing and made it easier than before. By knowing their status, people can make better choices, live healthier lives and become part of the drive to prevent the disease.

Today, we have a golden opportunity to eliminate viral hepatitis. Governments, civil society, the private sector and academia all have a duty to develop multisectoral strategies and set targets for preventing, diagnosing and treating viral hepatitis.

Hepatitis testing is a lifesaver. I call upon all policy-makers to make hepatitis testing available, and I call upon people to discuss their hepatitis risk with their healthcare providers and get tested accordingly.

EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN
The Ministry of Public Health held an event to mark World Hepatitis Day where the Minister of Public Health, Ferozudin Feroz, spoke about the current situation in Afghanistan and highlighted the progress of the government’s vaccination campaign in 16 provinces across the country.

The Ministry of Health and the WHO Country Office in Egypt hosted a commemoration event at Al Azhar Park in Cairo at the event they launched a new national campaign to eliminate hepatitis C. The event involved a run and free testing at the park for attendees, with video clips about hepatitis being shown throughout the event.

The Ministry of Health organised a lecture for healthcare professionals about hepatitis C with well-known liver specialist, Dr Hisham Ayoub. The Ministry also distributed posters with information about hepatitis B and C in healthcare buildings across 18 locations. Flyers with statistics about hepatitis were given to patients in hospital clinics.

WHA Member Association of Liver Patients Care (ALPC) partnered with the Egyptian Liver Foundation (ELRIAH) to hold an event at the Egyptian Liver Hospital in El Dakhlyia. During the event, 100 student nurses from the hospital’s Nursing Institute were given rapid testing for hepatitis B and C. There were also activities for children, including a puppet show and magician, a theatre production, and competitions with prizes. Nine short Arabic animation films were screened to raise awareness about the risks associated with hepatitis C infection. ALPC provided Find the Missing Millions t-shirts to volunteers. World Hepatitis Day t-shirts, flyers, posters and personal hygiene kits were distributed to people at the event. The celebration also included a presentation by Professor Ammal Metwally, World Hepatitis Alliance Regional Board Member for the Eastern Mediterranean Region, Research Professor of Public Health, Preventive and Community Medicine at the National Research Center and Head of the Epidemiology Unit at ELRIAH. Professor Metwally gave an update on Egypt’s progress towards the elimination of hepatitis, and also discussed the WHA recommendations for overcoming barriers to diagnosis and the role of healthcare professionals in diagnosing Hepatitis C and B.

The Ministry of Health posted a blog on its website, referencing the Find the Missing Millions campaign, about the requirements for achieving the country’s goals to eliminate hepatitis. The Vice Chairman of the Parliamentary Healthcare Committee, Seyyed Mortazay Khatami, also gave an interview to the media about the importance of preventing the transmission of hepatitis.

WHA Member Iran Hepatitis Network coordinated a wide variety of activities across the country. More than 500 medical students conducted public outreach to raise awareness about viral hepatitis.
The WHO Country Office in Iraq re-tweeted the WHO Western Pacific account.

Participation was noted from:
■ Department of Health, Salah al-Din

Professor Alavian, Director of Iran Hepatitis Network, gave interviews with a number of TV and radio outlets about World Hepatitis Day and the viral hepatitis outbreak in Iran. Furthermore, Iran Hepatitis Network launched a poster campaign through the Telegram Bot Platform. Over 2,000 people created their own posters with their name, photos and a slogan suggested by the bot, and shared these on social networks. In addition, Iran Hepatitis Network designed three customisable Find the Missing Millions posters. They also developed an infographic on viral hepatitis with statistics about the prevalence of hepatitis in Iran, which was shared on social media channels. More than 100,000 brochures with information about hepatitis B and C were also printed and distributed by state and private institutions across the country.

Participation was noted from:
■ Aqqala Municipality
■ Fatemiyeh Health Centre
■ Galician Municipality
■ Guilan University of Medical Sciences
■ Iranian Blood Transfusion Organization
■ Kashan University of Medical Sciences
■ Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences
■ Sasan Hospital
■ Shaheed Mostafa Khomeini
■ Shahid Beheshti Hospital
■ Shahidan Mobini Hospital
■ Trita Hospital
■ Zaheden Hospitals

The Ministry of Health’s Information Office held a commemoration involving free testing for hepatitis C and medical consultations. Educational films were screened at the event and brochures with information about hepatitis were also distributed.
Lebanon

WHA Member Soins Infirmiers Et Développement Communautaire (SIDC) held awareness raising activities on the streets of Beirut, focusing on the importance of preventing hepatitis B.

WHO Country Office in Lebanon shared a Facebook post with an informational graphic from the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean.

Libya

Participation was noted from:
- Department of Health Services, Benghazi

Morocco

Participation was noted from:
- The Moroccan Association for the Fight against AIDS

Pakistan

WHA Member The Health Foundation (THF) organised awareness-raising walks in Karachi, Ghotki, Lahore, and Sanghar which were covered by media outlets including Geo News, Daily Times and Jung. They also held a screening camp at Patel Hospital in Karachi where 200 people were tested for hepatitis B and C. In addition, they organised a hepatitis awareness seminar and Q&A for 100 doctors, nurses and medical staff at the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases in Karachi, led by Dr Saad Niaz; Director at THF and Consultant Gastroenterologist, and THF Executive Director Dr Laila Rizvi. THF conducted outreach activities in a number of villages in the districts of Tharparkar, Sanghar, and Rashidabad in Sindh to raise awareness about the risks associated with hepatitis. The theme of these sessions was ‘prevention is better than cure’. THF also promoted World Hepatitis Day on social media using Find the Missing Millions campaign materials.

Zhwandoon Welfare Organization organised an event to educate staff and patients about hepatitis and how to control it. Testing and vaccination was carried out and the day finished with a walk in Peshawar to raise awareness among the public about viral hepatitis and its complications.

Bridging Health Foundation conducted awareness and testing sessions at three refugee camps – Banasar Camp, Manik Payan 1, and Manik Payan 2 – in Muzaffarabad and Kashmir. They also had an article published in a scientific journal about hepatitis elimination in Pakistan by 2030.

Life Foundation shared a promotional post for the day on Facebook.

WHO Country Office in Pakistan shared information about hepatitis transmission on Twitter.

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Pakistan

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Participation was noted from:
- Aga Khan University Hospital, Karachi
- Aitebar
- Asian Institute of Medical Sciences, Hyderabad, Sindh
- Back to life
- Baqai University, Karachi
- Chandka Medical College Larkana, Sindh
- Citizens Education Development Foundation
- District Health Authority Jhelum
- Dow University of Health Sciences
- Dr Ziauddin University Hospital
- Fatimid Foundation
- GM Mahar Medical College, Sukkur
- Hunar Foundation
- Jinnah Sindh Medical University and Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Center
- Liaquat National Hospital, Karachi
- LUMS
- Nixor
- Pakistan Kidney and Liver Institute and Research Center
- Pakistan Society for the Study of Liver Diseases
- Peoples Medical College Larkana, Sindh
- Rashidabad Welfare Memorial Trust
- Shifa International Hospital
- SINA
- Sindh Engro Coal Mining Corporation

Palestine (Occupied Territory)

Participation was noted from:
- Palestine Medical Complex

Qatar

The Ministry of Public Health marked the day by highlighting its continuing work with the Center for Transitional Diseases at the Hamad Medical Corporation, and other organisations, to establish a national monitoring system for viral hepatitis, carrying out awareness campaigns and implementing early testing drives for hepatitis C. The most recent testing campaign tested 7,600 people in primary healthcare centres and the prevalence of the disease was significantly reduced. The Ministry also reported that, in co-operation with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, it carried out a survey of school students to detect hepatitis B, which showed no cases of the disease due to the high coverage of its vaccination programme. A representative from the Hamad Medical Corporation also announced that there would be a new Center for Transitional Diseases that would play an important role in preventing hepatitis infection through immunization and health education programmes.

Participation was noted from:
- Primary Health Care Corporation
- Qatar Red Crescent

This day is a great opportunity to raise awareness about viral hepatitis as a large number of those who are infected with these diseases are unaware.

Iran Hepatitis Network, Iran
The Ministry of Health announced a joint venture agreement with AbbVie to intensify their efforts to eliminate HCV in the country by 2030. As part of this, the Ministry explained that it would test 100,000 people by the end of 2018. The Ministry reported that it had doubled the number of hospitals and health centers approved for treating hepatitis C, with 25 major hospitals and 48 new treatment centers scheduled to open.

The Ministry of Health also held an awareness raising event with Kabidak, the Society for Liver Patients, which included an exhibition and the distribution of leaflets which explained the types of hepatitis, and infection and prevention methods. The Ministry posted information about World Hepatitis Day on its website and shared informational graphics and animations about hepatitis on Twitter.

Participation was noted from:
- Saudi Society for Liver Disease
- Dhahra Namar Health Centre
- Friends of Patients Committee, Onaiza
- Prince Mohammed bin Abdulaziz Hospital, Medina

The Ministry of Public Health announced it was preparing to launch its first national strategy to combat viral hepatitis. The strategy will set out a plan of action over the next five years and aims to bring together key stakeholders to reduce the infection rate by 90% by 2030.

Participation was noted from:
- Lattakia Health Directorate

The Ministry of Health convened a working session under the supervision of the Minister of Health, Mr Imad Columbine. The meeting was dedicated to discussing how stakeholders involved in implementing the National Program for the Elimination of Viral Hepatitis C can ensure more effective collaboration.
The Ministry of Health and Community Protection launched an awareness-raising campaign at Sharjah Training and Development Center on the importance of early detection. The launch event included free medical examinations and the distribution of materials on transmission routes, prevention methods, diagnosis, and treatment options. Events were then held at Dubai Festival City and Dubai Electricity and Water Authority, concluding in southern Dubai. A social media campaign was also implemented with the launch of the national campaign.

Participation was noted from:
- Dubai Police

WHO Country Office in Yemen shared a poster from the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean on Facebook and tweeted about the importance of getting tested for hepatitis.

Participation was noted from:
- WahgAlhayah Foundation
World Hepatitis Day is an opportunity to inform the community about the importance and ways of successful viral hepatitis prevention, treatment and care, and to speak out about the necessity of giving support to those living with hepatitis and creating a society free of stigma and discrimination.

AS - Center for the Empowerment Youth of people who are living with HIV and AIDS, Serbia
Viral hepatitis is a public health threat that affects tens of millions in the WHO European Region, more than two thirds of whom live in eastern Europe and central Asia. Every day, thousands of people still become infected, due to exposure through unsafe injection practices and insufficient information and tools for prevention.

Of the 5 main hepatitis viruses that cause acute and/or chronic infection, referred to as types A, B, C, D and E, chronic hepatitis B and C are responsible for approximately 88% of all deaths due to viral hepatitis in the European Region. An estimated 170 000 people die from causes related to hepatitis B and C each year.

Hepatitis B and C prevalence ranges from less than 0.5% in western, northern and central Europe to 3–8% in eastern Europe and central Asia.

Timely testing and treatment of hepatitis B and C can save lives

Chronic viral hepatitis B and C can lead to severe diseases such as cirrhosis and liver cancer. These infections may not show symptoms for a long time, sometimes decades, and slowly damage the liver. Globally, at least 60% of liver cancer cases are due to late testing and treatment of viral hepatitis B and C.

Testing is important to diagnose chronic hepatitis B and C infection and begin treatment, if needed. Hepatitis B can be effectively treated, when treatment is necessary. Treatment of hepatitis C virus infection has greatly improved in recent years. Direct-acting antivirals (DAAs) can cure the infection in more than 95% of cases, including at a late stage of the liver disease, with a treatment period that usually lasts 12 weeks.

WHO recommendations and goals on testing and treatment

WHO recommends that all people at risk of hepatitis B and C should be offered testing. People diagnosed with chronic hepatitis B virus infection need to be regularly checked and assessed, and offered treatment when needed. New WHO hepatitis C guidelines recommend that all people diagnosed with chronic hepatitis C should be offered treatment with DAAs. Countries in the European Region have made substantial progress on prevention, but many of them need to scale up action towards universal access to testing and treatment.

In 2016, Member States in the European Region adopted the Action Plan for the Health Sector Response to Viral Hepatitis in the WHO European Region. They also committed to the global goal of eliminating viral hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030, in line with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Since then, many countries have demonstrated increasing commitment in scaling up the response to viral hepatitis and setting national elimination goals. The WHO Regional Office for Europe is working closely with several Member States to develop national action plans. The Regional Office is also supporting countries to raise awareness, strengthen surveillance and laboratory capacity, and update national treatment and care guidelines.

Romania: moving towards universal access to testing and treatment

Romania faces a high burden of chronic viral hepatitis in the general population. Insufficient infection control in health-care settings decades ago was the cause of increased infections. A national survey among adults estimated a prevalence about double the regional average for hepatitis C (at 3.2%), or triple the average for hepatitis B (at 4.4%). Low testing rates and insufficient awareness about chronic viral hepatitis contributed to limited access to treatment and care.

To address this situation, the Ministry of Health has committed to establishing sustainable programmes that ensure universal coverage for testing, diagnosis, and access to cost-effective treatment for all those affected by hepatitis B and C.

To increase testing rates, Romania began in May 2018 to provide free viral hepatitis testing upon referral from a general practitioner. In addition, it will start implementing large-scale testing programmes in 4 regions to pilot the set-up of a national infrastructure and a national testing strategy. The sustainability of these programmes, started with initial funds from the European Union, will be ensured through a shift to domestic funding.

Since 2017, more than 12 000 hepatitis C patients belonging to selected groups have been treated with DAAs, doubling the number of those treated in 2015. Romania is planning a major effort to extend treatment coverage to all those affected, estimated to be more than 500 000, using domestic funds.

National large-scale testing and treatment interventions are part of a comprehensive action plan for the elimination of viral hepatitis. The plan is being developed by the Ministry of Health of Romania with technical support from WHO and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and through extensive consultations with stakeholders.
Albania

The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare promoted World Hepatitis Day on social media and shared information about viral hepatitis on its website. The Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Ogerta Manastirliu, tweeted to highlight the importance of the day.

Armenia

The Ministry of Health held a press conference during which the Head of Epidemiology at the Department for Non-Communicable Diseases and Infectious Diseases, Romella Abovyan, discussed the current challenges, achievements and future plans of the government’s 2015-2020 programme to prevent and control hepatitis.

WHO Country Office in Armenia organised a flash mob in one of Yerevan city’s central streets where 20 participants wearing NOhep branded t-shirts distributed leaflets to passers-by to raise awareness about hepatitis. WHO Armenia also held a press conference and shared a graphic posted by the WHO Regional Office for Europe on Facebook.

Participation was noted from:
- Positive People Armenian Network
- Nork Infectious Diseases Hospital, Yerevan

Austria

WHA Member Hepatitis Hilfe Österreich (HHÖ) held their first meeting with Health Minister, Beate Hartinger Klein, to discuss a national hepatitis elimination strategy for Austria. HHÖ organised a press conference where speakers included HHÖ’s Chairman; Angelika Widhalm, and Secretary-General; Martin Prais, Chief Physician at the Federal Ministry of Constitutional Affairs, Reforms, Deregulation and Justice; Mag. Margit Winterleitner, and clinical experts from hospitals in Vienna. HHÖ also created a World Hepatitis Day media pack and attended a briefing with the Editor of national newspaper, Kronen Zeitung.

Participation was noted from:
- University of Internal Medicine, Innsbruck
- AIDS Hilfe Steiermark

Azerbaijan

The Ministry of Health held a press conference outlining the work of WHO and WHA in eliminating viral hepatitis and the government’s work to combat the disease in Azerbaijan. Information was also provided about hepatitis prevention and treatment methods.
Belarus

The Ministry of Health published a statement on its website about the current situation in Belarus, highlighting the fall in hepatitis B prevalence due to the country’s vaccination programme, and providing tips for prevention.

Belgium

WHa Member Carrefour Hepatites drafted a press release, which they also shared on Facebook. Vlaams Hepatitis Contactpunt shared Find the Missing Millions campaign materials on Facebook.

Participation was noted from:
- Favour Lowcost Healthcare Foundation

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Chronic Viral Hepatitis Patients Association “B18” held an awareness-raising activity in Krajina Square, Banja Luka where volunteers distributed educational materials on viral hepatitis to the public and informed them about free, anonymous testing for hepatitis B and hepatitis C at a local clinic. Over 100 people were then tested at the Clinic for Infectious Diseases in Banja Luka. The organisation also promoted the event on Facebook.

Bulgaria

In Sofia, Bulgaria, under the auspices of the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the EU, the Health Committee of the National Assembly and the Ministry of Health hosted a high-level regional conference “Screening and prevention of viral hepatitis and HIV in CEE. Common challenges and joint solutions.”. The event was attended by representatives of 10 countries from the Central and Eastern Europe region. The conference was hosted by WHA member the National Association for Fighting Hepatitis “Hepasist” and the Bulgarian Association for Study of the Liver. The event brought together over 80 participants, including Members of the European Parliament, representatives of the European Commission – Health and Safety Directorate, WHO, state institutions, health authorities, and experts, journalists and industry. Participants and panel members discussed the need to engage and unite all stakeholders to prevent the spread of hepatitis. Best practice case studies on elimination policies and programmes from across the region were presented. The event closed with the adoption of a resolution committing participants to develop comprehensive programmes for the screening and prevention of viral hepatitis and HIV.

WHa Members Hepasist and HepActive initiated a national testing and information campaign “Cut ties with hepatitis” which was launched during the high-level regional conference. One of the main activities held as part of the campaign was an event that was held in the National Assembly of Bulgaria. The Head of WHO Country Office in Bulgaria; Dr Skender Syla, the Deputy Minister of Health; Svetlana Yordanova, President of the National Assembly; Tsveta Karayancheva, Deputy Chairman of the Health Commission; Associate Professor Dr Lachezar Ivanov, MPs and journalists were in attendance. Dr Stanimir Hasurdjiev, Chairperson of Hepasist, highlighted the lack of a national screening programme for hepatitis as a major issue in Bulgaria. Attendees were given a yellow tie or neck scarf to wear, which they were then invited to cut so as to symbolically ‘cut ties (continued on next page)
Bulgaria

The Ministry of Health and the Bulgarian Public Health Institute, in partnership with the Bulgarian Association for Fight against HIV and Viral Hepatitis, launched a national campaign titled ‘Eliminate Hepatitis C Now!’ The campaign included an online educational platform and a mobile app named ‘All about Hepatitis’, which promoted awareness of prevention, early detection, and treatment. The campaign was supported by various government departments and non-governmental organizations.

Participation was noted from:
- Bulgarian Patient Forum Federation
- St Sofia Hospital

The Ministry also presented the joint resolution from the high-level regional conference for participants to sign and commit their support to the fight against hepatitis. As part of the campaign, four testing events were held in Smolyan, Shumen, Stara Zagora and Kardzhali. These activities were realized by the National Association for Fighting Hepatitis “Hepasist” and HepActive Association and they were under the auspices of the Healthcare Committee of the Bulgarian Parliament and different members of the Bulgarian parliament (Daniela Daritkova-Prodanova, Nigyar Dzhafer, Krasitina Taskova and Tsveeta Karayancheva).

Participation was noted from:
- Bulgarian Patient Forum Federation
- St Sofia Hospital

Croatia

The Croatian Public Health Institute partnered with the Croatian Association for the Fight against HIV and Viral Hepatitis to launch a new national campaign ‘Eliminate Hepatitis C Now!’ The campaign included an online educational platform and a mobile app ‘All about Hepatitis’, which promoted the importance of prevention, early detection, and treatment. The campaign was supported by the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Science and Education, the Education Agency, the Croatian Institute for Health Insurance, the Clinic for Infectious Diseases, the City of Zagreb, the Croatian Red Cross, the Croatian Pharmaceutical Society, the Croatian Institute for Transfusion Medicine and others.

The Croatian Association of Treated and Ill with Hepatitis “Hepatos” Zagreg and Zagreb County led an awareness campaign, sponsored by the City of Zagreb’s Health Office, for which posters were displayed on Zagreb’s public transport network including buses and trams. They also promoted Find the Missing Millions campaign materials on their website.

The Croatian Association of Treated and Ill with Hepatitis “Hepatos” deployed its Mobile InfoHep Center to several locations in Vis and Split, offering free testing for hepatitis C and HIV, counselling and liver scans. They also ran an awareness campaign, with posters displayed on buses and trams in four cities. In addition, they co-organised a World Hepatitis Day Symposium at the Clinic for Infectious Diseases in Zagreb, where staff from the Mobile InfoHep Center presented the findings from their outreach. Finally, they wrote to the Prime Minister and other relevant ministers and parliamentarians, urging them to ensure progress in the elimination of viral hepatitis.

WHA Member Croatian Association of Treated and Ill with Hepatitis “Hepatos” Zagreg and Zagreb County led an awareness campaign, sponsored by the City of Zagreb’s Health Office, for which posters were displayed on Zagreb’s public transport network including buses and trams. They also promoted Find the Missing Millions campaign materials on their website.

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The spread of hepatitis in Ukraine is the largest in Europe, so we need national information campaigns and measures to expand the capacity to diagnose and provide treatment for hepatitis B and C.

ALLIANCE.GLOBAL, Public Organization, Ukraine
Georgia
The Prime Minister, Mamuka Bakhtadze, launched a new awareness campaign ‘STOP C’ at an event on World Hepatitis Day, attended by Cabinet Ministers, representatives of the Health Committee, patients, medical experts, international partners, and representatives of the U.S. Embassy in Georgia. The Prime Minister spoke about the country’s national strategy to combat hepatitis C, launched in 2016, and said that, since then, a third of the population has been tested and 50,000 people are currently being treated for the disease. He also stated that by 2020, the strategy would be fully implemented and Georgia would have eradicated hepatitis C. At the event, photography exhibitions about Temur Radiani, a patient cured of hepatitis C, and the elimination programme were on display. Event attendees were also tested for hepatitis.

Germany
The Federal Statistical Office published an overview of current hepatitis data in Germany. Tino Sorge, Member of the Bundestag, also posted a statement on his website.

As in previous years, WHA Member Deutsche Leberhilfe e.V coordinated World Hepatitis Day and the German WHD website www.welthepatitistag.info. In the month leading up to WHD, Deutsche Leberhilfe e.V sent out four press releases revolving around the elimination of viral hepatitis B and C, with information about hepatitis E as an emerging and widespread infection in Germany. In addition, Leberhilfe published a flyer on viral hepatitis, as well as

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greece
With the support of the Ministry of Health, WHA Members Hellenic Liver Patient Association (Helpa) “Prometheus” and Hellenic Association for the Study of the Liver (HASL) launched a campaign to raise awareness about the prevalence of hepatitis C. The campaign microsite shared information about hepatitis transmission and prevention, and inspired people to make their own videos, upload them to social media and then encourage three friends to take the same action. Campaign posters and videos also featured national celebrities.

Participation was noted from:
- Deutsche Leberstiftung
- Initiative Pro Leber
- Helmholtz Center for Infection Research
Hungary

WHA Member Májbetegkéért Alapítvány hosted a press conference with patient association Vírusos Májbeteg Országos Egyesülete. WHO Country Office in Hungary promoted World Hepatitis Day on social media, highlighting the need for early treatment.

Ireland

The Minister of State for Health Promotion, Catherine Byrne TD, launched the Health Service Executive’s patient-focused online resource for information about hepatitis C and, in a statement, encouraged people who may be at risk of carrying the disease to use the resource and find out where they can get tested. The Health Protection Surveillance Center, Ireland’s specialist agency for the surveillance of communicable diseases, included information on World Hepatitis Day and Find the Missing Millions in its report series ‘Epi-Insight’.

WHA Members Community Response and Hepatitis C Partnership held a joint activity during which they conducted rapid testing for hepatitis and fibroscanning. Community Response also promoted the Find the Missing Millions campaign and Thunderclap on Twitter.

Israel

Participation was noted from:
- Rambam Health Center – Center for Liver Diseases

Italy

The Ministry of Health provided background information on World Hepatitis Day and the situation both globally, and in Italy, on its website. Government body Higher Institute of Health (ISS) posted information about World Hepatitis Day on its website, and began a collaboration with the Italian Desk of Unric, the UN Information Office for Western Europe, that led to the creation of a presentation of the activities that the ISS carries forward on the topic of viral hepatitis, accompanied by two video messages.

WHA Member EPAC published a joint press release with the Italian Association of the Study of the Liver (AISF) detailing the positive developments in Italy’s elimination of hepatitis C while highlighting the need to intensify collaboration among stakeholders to ensure the elimination of hepatitis by 2030.

Participation was noted from:
- IRCCS San Raffaele Hospital
- Italian Red Cross National Agency for Drug Addiction
- Updating Medicina del Lavoro
- Villa Maraini Foundation
- Italian Medicines Agency (AIFA)
Kazakhstan

The Research Institute of Cardiology and Internal Diseases at the Ministry of Health, WHA Member AGEP, and the Kazakh Association for Liver Study organised an event for patients, which featured presentations by doctors and clinical experts and Q&A sessions. They also organised training for hepatologists, epidemiologists and healthcare professionals on measures to prevent, diagnose and treat hepatitis.

Participation was noted from:
- Nur Shuglya Kindergarten
- Polyclinic No 5 Kyzylorda
- Gastro-Hepato Transplant Group
- The Medical Centre Hospital of the President’s Affairs Administration of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Kyrgyzstan

The Centre for Health Promotion at the Ministry of Health published a series of posts and videos on Facebook providing information about hepatitis.

Latvia

The Department of Communicable Diseases at the Ministry of Health shared information with the media about the current state of prevalence in Lithuania and preventative measures.

Participation was noted from:
- Daugavpils Regional Hospital
- Hepatitis C Patients’ Association
- Latvian Red Cross
- Liepāja City Council Social Service Addiction Prevention Center

Lithuania

The Ministry of Health provided an information stand in the forecourt of Luxembourg City Station which distributed educational materials and provided free testing to the public.

World Hepatitis Day is a great opportunity to raise awareness.

Swiss Hepatitis, Switzerland
Macedonia

The Ministry of Health posted about World Hepatitis Day and the Find the Missing Millions campaign on Facebook.

Participation was noted from:
- Hepar Center Bitola
- PHI Centre for Public Health
- Association of People with Liver Disease – Slaap

Malta

The Minister of Health Chris Fearne gave an update about Malta’s national elimination strategy for hepatitis C, launched in February 2018, at a World Hepatitis Day commemoration event. The Health Promotion and Disease Directorate produced three leaflets on hepatitis A, B and C, distributed at health centres, hospitals, migrant and community centres, and workplaces.

Poland

WHA Member Fundacj “Gwiazda Nadziei” Star of Hope Foundation launched a new website, providing educational resources for healthcare professionals including an e-learning course for hepatitis C for doctors, a list of establishments providing hepatitis treatment, and information on free hepatitis C testing. They also co-ordinated a meeting with doctors and experts from the Polish Society of Hepatology and organised a Find the Missing Millions themed press conference focusing on hepatitis C.

Participation was noted from:
- HTL-STREFA
- Medical University of Warsaw
- Ursula Jaworska Foundation

Netherlands

WHA Member Dutch Liver Patients Association marked the day on social media and provided commentary for news stories published on the day. Dutch Liver Patients Association Director, Jose Willemse, also gave an interview on RTV Utrecht.
Portugal

WHA Member SOS Hepatitis Portugal held an awareness-raising event at Santa Cruz Beach where they spoke to members of the public about viral hepatitis and distributed leaflets.

The Ministry of Health posted on Facebook and, on the eve of World Hepatitis Day, the National Drug Authority (Infarmed) released data saying that more than 10,600 hepatitis C patients have been cured in Portugal over the last three years, with the cure rate remaining above 96%.

Participation was noted from:
- Ares do Pinhal
- Centro Social Paramos
- Gabinete de Atendimento à Família (GAF)
- League of Friends, Viana do Castelo Hospital
- Local Health Unit, Alto Minho

Republic of Moldova

Republic of Moldova

The Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection provided details about the treatment of people in Moldova, following the launch and implementation of its national elimination strategy in 2016, and encouraged citizens with hepatitis to have their health assessed.

The Ministry also published a statement on its website comparing Moldova’s rate of deaths caused by hepatitis with Europe’s. It also gave an overview of awareness-raising and educational activities carried out by civil society organisations for World Hepatitis Day.

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WHO Country Office in the Republic of Moldova posted on Facebook, referencing data from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection about hepatitis treatment in Moldova since 2016, which showed 11,197 people had been treated for hepatitis B, hepatitis C or hepatitis D.

Participation was noted from:
- Department of Health – Raionul Causeni
- Department of Health – Orhei
- Tom Chorbe Infectious Diseases Hospital

Romania

The Ministry of Health shared a press release stating that it was finalising the national strategy and implementation plan for fighting chronic hepatitis, to be launched the following month. The strategy would follow WHO guidelines for the eradication of viral hepatitis by 2030. The press release said that the Ministry of Health had commenced the first stage of the National Screening Program for Viral Hepatitis, and that early detection activity would begin at the end of the year. The press release was also shared on the Ministry’s Facebook page.

WHO Country Office in Romania posted a statement on its website highlighting the steps taken by the Ministry of Health to increase testing rates in the country, including plans to implement a large-scale testing programme in four regions to pilot the set-up of
the national testing strategy. WHO Romania also posted about the day on Facebook.

WHA Member Romanian Liver Patients Association (APAH-RO) organised a press conference, during which APAH-RO’s President, Marinela Debu, stressed that, despite the law, many patients are unable to access services like fibroscans, because hospitals do not have the equipment. APAH-RO held awareness-raising and testing events in Bucharest, Iasi, Brasov, Ploiesti, and Cluj. They also organised a sports event ‘Together for 2030’ at Tractorul Sports Park in Brasov where competitors took part in a running race of either 230 metres or 2,030 metres. The 230m race was for children aged 5-8 years and 9-12 years, and the 2030m race was aimed at children aged 13-18 and adults aged 19-30 and over 30 years. APAH-RO also held a three-day meeting for its members in Ocolis. Attendees took part in a cooking competition and a picnic, and informational materials were distributed to citizens.

Fundatia Baylor Marea Neagra (Baylor Black Sea Foundation) participated by posting information on their website and social media channels, using the day to highlight the need for people to get tested and promote their free testing service. Chief Executive, Ana-Maria Schweitzer, provided commentary to the Telegraf Online, and Violeta Cîndea, General Practitioner at the Foundation, gave an interview with Digi24 Constanta.

Participation was noted from:
- Alexandria City Hall
- Alexandria State Post Health School
- Arad County Public Health Directorate
- Association of Patients with Hepatic Diseases, Brasov Branch
- Brasov County Athletics Association
- Brasov County Youth and Sports Directorate
- Brasov Public Health Department

WHA Member United Against Hepatitis designed and printed 10,000 postcards addressed to Russian Prime Minister, Dmitry Medvedev. Alexei Lakhov, a United Against Hepatitis Board Member explained to the media that this campaign action had been undertaken to remind the government of its commitment to the 2016 agreed targets towards the elimination of viral hepatitis and the need to develop a National Strategy. United Against Hepatitis was also a recipient of 4,000 point-of-care rapid tests for hepatitis C, provided by the World Hepatitis Alliance and InTec Products. The organisation will work with the charitable fund Humanitarian Action to test 4,000 people in St. Petersburg using three mobile points. One mobile point will be used for testing among drug users, one for testing among sex workers, and the third one will be used for testing among the general population. Over a five-month period, people who test positive will

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The Institute of Public Health published a statement on its website detailing the current status of hepatitis prevalence in Serbia. The Institute of Public Health, in partnership with WHA Member HRONOS, and a number of Serbia’s city public health institutes, organised a series of free testing and counselling events in Belgrade, Novi Sad, Kraljevo, Pozarevac, Sabac, Kikinda, and Pirot with support from the Ministry of Health.

The Ministry of Health and HRONOS hosted a press conference at which the President of HRONOS; Ivana Dragojević, Ministry of Health Representative; Dr. Ferenc Vicko, and medical experts discussed the burden of hepatitis in Serbia and the steps being taken to eliminate the disease. It was announced that in September 2018 the first patients would receive modern, non-interferon therapies for hepatitis C treatment through the Health Insurance Fund.

WHA Member AS Centar attended Way of Life Festival and led a number of activities including interactive peer education workshops on preventing viral hepatitis, HIV, and STIs, one-to-one psychological and legal counselling, and testing. They also distributed free condoms to all festival visitors. AS Centar also marked World Hepatitis Day on social media.

WHO Country Office in Serbia shared a video from WHO Regional Office for Europe featuring Dr Antons Mozalevskis from the WHO Collaborating Centre on HIV and Viral Hepatitis talking about hepatitis viruses, transmission and prevention.

Participation was noted from:
- Public Health Bureau of Ćuprija “Pomoravlje”
- Institute for Public Health Belgrade
- Institute for Public Health Kraljevo
- Institute for Public Health Kragujevac
- Institute for Public Health Pozarevac
- Institute for Public Health Sabac
- Institute for Public Health Kikinda

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be referred to the S.P. Botkin Clinical Infectious Diseases Hospital and the Infectious Diseases and AIDS Center. Peer counsellors will be on hand to provide before and after counselling on viral hepatitis transmission routes, associated risks, and preventing reinfection.

WHA Member Saratov Regional Public Organization for Treatment and Prevention of Hepatitis held two events at the Trade Centre and City Park in Saratov to raise awareness about hepatitis. During the events they provided information on preventing hepatitis and circulated a questionnaire for children and adults to determine their level of risk. They partnered with a number of organisations for the events, including media outlet Moskovsky Kom somolets. They also organised a free testing event for hepatitis B and hepatitis C at the Saratov DNA-Centre, where they provided counselling on hepatitis prevention measures, medical follow-up, and treatment.

Participation was noted from:
- Educational Committee, City of Saratov Administration
- Khabarovsk Regional Museum
- Ministry of Health, Chelyabinsk
- Ministry of Health, Khabarovsk Territory
- Ministry of Health, Moscow Region
- Ministry of Health, Tyumen Region
- Pavlodar Center for Healthy Lifestyle Support
- Polyclinic № 1., Bashkiria
- Regional Medical College, Saratov
- Sverdlovsk Regional Center for Medical Prevention
- Ufa Infectious Clinical Hospital No. 4

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Spain

The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare issued a press release stating that since the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Hepatitis C began in January 2015, an average of 2,679 patients a month have started treatment. While initially the treatment was carried out based on the severity, risk of transmission, and the National Health System’s capacity, in June 2017 an update to the strategy was proposed to include all patients, regardless of the degree of liver fibrosis. The Ministry also promoted the press release and World Hepatitis Day on social media.

WHA Member the Catalan Association of Hepatitis Patients (ASSCAT) and partners the National Federation of Liver Patients and Transplants (FNETH), the Alliance for the Elimination of Viral Hepatitis in Spain (AEHVE), the Working Group on HIV Treatments (GtT-HIV), Positive Support, and the Spanish Association for the Study of the Liver (AEEH) launched a Change.org petition, calling on health authorities to promote testing to detect unknown cases of hepatitis C. The organisations also launched a social media campaign using the hashtags #CribadosinC and #EliminatalaC.

In addition, ASSCAT held a walk in partnership with Catalan’s Department of Health and an information and hepatitis C testing event with Red Cross Barcelona. ASSCAT also organised a symposium, during which they provided an overview of progress over the past year, and presented a series of initiatives and best practice case studies in the context of at-risk groups, including people who inject drugs, men who have sex with men co-infected with HIV, immigrants from countries with a high prevalence of hepatitis, and young people. Finally, ASSCAT published a special edition of their magazine asscatinform@ on World Hepatitis Day.

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Spain

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WHA Member Organización Nacional de Afectados por Hepatitis Viralies (ONAH) participated in World Hepatitis Day online via social media.

Participation was noted from:
- Complejo Hospitalario Universitario de Canarias (HUC)
- Ibiza Rocks
- La Plataforma Galega de Afectados pola Hepatite C
- Ministry of Health, Catalan
- Ministry of Health, Basque Government
- Plataforma de Afectados por la Hepatitis C
- The Association of Liver and Transplanted Liver Diseases of Navarra (Atehna)

Sweden

WHA Member Riksforeningen Hepatit C observed World Hepatitis Day on Facebook, sharing a Find the Missing Millions social media graphic and encouraging people with hepatitis to receive a health check-up and those at risk to get tested.

Participation was noted from:
- Sweden County Council

Switzerland

WHA Member Swiss Hepatitis launched an online and offline awareness campaign with Swiss celebrities, aiming to increase testing for viral hepatitis. The campaign featured doctor and comedian, Fabian Unteregger, and writer, Pedro Lenz. Leaflets and posters were distributed in therapeutic centres, medical offices and laboratories. A video of patient testimonies was also produced to raise awareness among the population about the risks associated with hepatitis infection, testing, and treatment options. All online and offline activity promoted a risk assessment tool on their website.

WHA Member Arud Centre for Addiction Medicine promoted the online risk assessment tool created by Swiss Hepatitis via their website and Facebook.

Swiss Hepatitis C Association produced a public statement aimed at the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH), which called for the FOPH to add the drug Vosevi to the list of specialties, therefore ensuring access to treatment for absolutely all patients with hepatitis C. They also promoted Swiss Experts in Viral Hepatitis’ campaign and risk test on Facebook and Twitter.
The Ministry of Health hosted a press conference where the Minister of Health, Ulyana Suprun, announced that, this year, family doctors would receive testing kits for diagnosing hepatitis C in patients who have a high level of risk. In 2019, she said, many more patients would be treated for the disease. The Minister also posted about hepatitis on her Facebook page. The Public Health Center of the Ministry of Health also held a rally and free testing for residents of Kiev.

World Hepatitis Alliance and infectious disease diagnostics manufacturer, InTec Products, provided WHA Member Spark of Hope with 2,000 point-of-care rapid tests for viral hepatitis. Spark of Hope will test 2,000 people over a five-month period in one of four hospital districts of Ternopil. Ternopil is one of the most deprived regions in the Ukraine, and, because of the high-cost of diagnostics and low awareness, only 693 people have been diagnosed with hepatitis C to-date out of a population of one million people.

WHA Member Public Organization ALLIANCE.GLOBAL held information and educational activities for the general population in Kiev. These included raising awareness about the risks of infection, testing, and treatment, conducting rapid testing for hepatitis C, and a press briefing, which resulted in significant media coverage. ALLIANCE.GLOBAL also implemented a Find the Missing Millions themed social media campaign on Facebook, Twitter and in online groups targeting key audiences including people living with HIV/AIDS, injecting drug users, men who have sex with men, and sex workers.

WHO Country Office in Ukraine, the Alliance for Public Health, and Kiev City Public Health Center collaborated to deliver mobile lab testing for hepatitis in Kiev. WHO Ukraine also marked World Hepatitis Day on Facebook.

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Participation was noted from:
- Alliance for Public Health
- Kiev City Public Health Center

**United Kingdom**

WHA Member The Hepatitis C Trust commissioned a study and released new data to mark World Hepatitis Day revealing low levels of awareness about important information relating to hepatitis C. Despite 80% of respondents stating they thought they knew what hepatitis C is, less than 40% knew that it infects the liver, and less than 30% knew the virus is curable. The Hepatitis C Trust partnered with Public Health England for World Hepatitis Day to raise awareness about the disease. Public Health England shared a press release on the UK Government website referencing the Trust’s study, and strongly urging people at risk of carrying hepatitis C to get tested. They shared the press release on social media and also re-tweeted the Trust. Public Health Minister Steve Brine, First Minister of Scotland Nicola Sturgeon, First Minister of Wales Carwyn Jones, and Ruth Davidson, Leader of the Scottish Conservatives, each provided a statement in support of World Hepatitis Day, and quotes by each of the leaders were included in the Trust’s press release.

Rachel Halford, Chief Executive of The Hepatitis C Trust wrote a blog for trade publication IndependentNurse, calling for increased community outreach efforts to ensure NHS England delivers on its goal to eliminate hepatitis C by 2025. The Trust also focused on supporting organisations around the UK to raise awareness of hepatitis C in their local areas. They did this firstly by providing local services with t-shirts, posters, balloons, leaflets and other materials to use at their events. Staff and volunteers also attended events to offer their support and expertise, for example at Victoria Court Housing Project in Sheffield and at Nightingales Café in Wirral.

As a partner in the HepScot campaign group, WHA Member Waverley Care, promoted its support for the HepScot campaign, which centred around three asks to the Scottish Government in order to eliminate hepatitis C in Scotland. These asks were highlighted to First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon in an interview with Scott Ferguson, a recovery development worker at Addictions Support and Counselling in Forth Valley. Waverley Care also showed its support for the Find the Missing Millions campaign.

WHA Member British Liver Trust (BLT) issued a press release highlighting the importance of finding those undiagnosed with viral hepatitis and for people who have been diagnosed to seek treatment. BLT Chief Executive, Judi Rhys, wrote an op-ed for medical blog The Hippocratic Post about tracking down ‘the missing millions’ and the need for early diagnosis. BLT also marked the day on social media and shared its ‘Love Your Liver screener’ tool to help people find out if they are at risk of carrying viral hepatitis.

Terrence Higgins Trust marked the day on social media.
United Kingdom

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Participation was noted from:

- Breakfast Club, Newcastle
- Bristol Drugs Project
- Bristol Royal Infirmary
- CGL Evolve
- Change Grow Live
- Clayton Street Clinic
- DACT
- Derbyshire Recovery partnership
- East Lancashire NHS Hospitals
- Fife (Hepatitis) Voices Forum (Scotland)
- Forth Valley Recovery Community (Scotland)
- Freeman Hospital
- Hackney Recovery Service/CNWLF
- HCV Action Steering Group
- HMP Belmarsh
- HMP Brinsford
- HMP Brixton
- HMP Dovegate
- HMP Downview
- HMP Isis
- HMP Styal
- HMP Warren Hill
- HMP Wormwood Scrubs
- Imperial College London
- King’s College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- Lorraine Hewitt House
- NHS Ayrshire and Arran (Scotland)
- NHS Tayside
- NTW, Newcastle
- Phoenix Futures
- Public Health Information Library, Stockton on Tees
- REACH Drug and Alcohol Services
- Redcar, Nuneaton
- ReNew
- Royal Cornwall Hospital
- Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital
- Sandyford, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (Scotland)
- Southend STARS
- St Mungos
- The Forward Trust
- The Hepatitis C Coalition
- Turning Point
- University of Nottingham
- Waltham Forest Council
- Wandsworth DAS
- Wester Hailes Healthy Living Centre, NHS Lothian (Scotland)
World Hepatitis Day reminds us that this is a huge global public health problem.

Chennai Liver Foundation

**Participation statistics**

10 countries participating

8 WHO Country Offices participating

530 people vaccinated*

91% of region participating

66,303 people attended events*

7 governments participating

7,678 people tested*

*Where reported, numbers likely to be higher

**Findings by country for WHA Members, national governments and WHO Country Offices**

1. Bangladesh
2. Bhutan
3. Democratic People’s Republic of Korea
4. India
5. Indonesia
6. Maldives
7. Myanmar
8. Nepal
9. Sri Lanka
10. Thailand
11. Timor-Leste

*No participation recorded
Message from WHO Regional Director for the South-East Asia region, Dr Poonam Khetrapal Singh

On 28 July every year World Hepatitis Day is marked across the globe, including in the WHO South-East Asia Region. It is an occasion to raise awareness of viral hepatitis, including its signs and symptoms and how it can be prevented, treated or cured, and to advocate for key changes in policy alongside greater investment in lifting the disease’s burden.

Notably, it is a day of optimism: 28 July is the birthday of the Nobel prize-winning scientist Dr Baruch Blumberg – the scientist who first discovered the hepatitis B virus, developed a powerful vaccine against it and saved millions of lives in the process. That is an important point to reflect on and embrace as we consider the theme of this year’s World Hepatitis Day – ‘Test. Treat. Hepatitis.’

Indeed, despite recent progress, every year viral hepatitis is responsible for an estimated 410 000 deaths across the South-East Asia Region – more than HIV and TB combined. An estimated 40 million people Region-wide live with chronic hepatitis B and an estimated 10 million live with chronic hepatitis C. Together hepatitis B and C account for around 90% of hepatitis-related mortality. The rest is caused by hepatitis A and E. Importantly, less than one in 10 infected people are estimated to know their status, while less than 10% of those who do know their status are receiving appropriate treatment. This lack of awareness and treatment leads to progressive liver damage and can cause life-threatening conditions such as fibrosis and cancer of the liver. It also allows the virus to spread.

Despite the challenges we face, with urgent, high-level commitment we can find the missing millions, test and treat them, and reach the time-bound targets of WHO South-East Asia’s Regional Action Plan for Viral Hepatitis. That means ensuring at least 50% of infected people know their status by 2020 and at least 75% of those diagnosed with the disease are provided treatment by the same deadline. Moreover, given that a substantial proportion of new hepatitis B infections occur through mother-to-child transmission and during early childhood, it is essential that 90% or more of newborns receive the hepatitis B vaccine’s birth dose and at least 95% of children complete the vaccine’s three-dose schedule. Increased injection safety in health facilities is likewise critical to prevent iatrogenic infections – those which occur in the process.

Achieving these outcomes is crucial if the Region is to eliminate viral hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030, as envisaged in WHO’s Global Health Sector Strategy on Viral Hepatitis. To reach our targets, enhancing knowledge and awareness of viral hepatitis among high-risk groups, civil society and the public more generally is key, especially given that hepatitis is often asymptomatic. Health authorities Region-wide should deploy clear messaging regarding the disease’s signs and symptoms, where they can get tested and treated, and how hepatitis infection can be prevented (for example by vaccination for hepatitis B, and safe sex and safe needle usage for hepatitis B and C). Not only will these interventions help stop the disease’s transmission; they will also ensure more people are aware of their status. Health authorities should also build health workers’ capacity to better detect hepatitis’ signs and symptoms and ensure each and every suspected case is tested.

To do that, health workers must have access to quality point-of-care diagnostics and laboratory testing. All testing kits, for example, should be affordable and quality assured. Results should meanwhile be communicated to individuals confidentially and without prejudice or stigma – outcomes that require targeted health worker education and sensitization programmes. Significantly, viral hepatitis testing should be integrated with HIV, antenatal care and cancer screening and treatment services. It should also occur under a clear set of national viral hepatitis testing guidelines.

Where individuals test positive for hepatitis B or C, access to effective and affordable treatment is vital. While treatments have existed for hepatitis B for some time, Directly-acting antiviral drugs can now cure hepatitis C in up to 95% of cases. In recent years the cost of these treatments has dramatically reduced, making them more accessible than ever, while most are now registered and licensed in each of the Region’s countries. To further increase access, Member States should make full use of flexibilities in global trade agreements, at the same time as ensuring all effective treatments are registered and licensed.

Today, on World Hepatitis Day, it is imperative our optimism is focused on the possible – that we take stock of the challenges we face, the tools at our disposal and our ability to act with decisive efficiency. Though the stakes are high and the burden immense, with urgent, high-level commitment we can find, test and treat the missing millions and reach each of the Regional Action Plan’s targets. Indeed, we can eliminate viral hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030 and – precisely as Dr Blumberg did – save millions of lives and avert needless suffering in the process.
The President and Prime Minister delivered special messages on World Hepatitis Day, which emphasised the importance of viral hepatitis elimination by 2030 in Bangladesh.

The Department of Health and WHA Member Forum for the Study of the Liver Bangladesh organised an awareness rally and educational seminars at the Health Department premises. The Chairman of the Forum for the Study of the Liver, Professor Dr Mamun Al Mahtab, presided over the ceremony.

Forum for the Study of the Liver Bangladesh also organised a seminar at the Jatiyo Press Club in Dhaka. Chairman Professor Dr Mamun Al Mahtab delivered a welcome speech and the Chairman of the Department of Hepatology at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSSMU), Dr Anisuzzaman, spoke about the challenge of meeting the cost of treatment for patients in Bangladesh, and the importance of increasing public awareness to prevent the disease.

The National Liver Foundation of Bangladesh (NLFB) observed the day with various awareness-raising events. The “Find the Missing Millions” campaign was used to offer screening among the indigenous people of Rangamati, Chittagong Hill Tracts. Free hepatitis B and C screening was conducted with 810 people of the ‘Chakma’ tribe of Rangamati. 244 patients of Bangladesh Thalassaemia Samity, Dhaka were also tested.

A colourful rally including roller skates, horses and motorbikes travelled through the streets of Dhaka city. Doctors, patients, and University students all participated.

A WHD 2018 seminar was held at the Daily Star Auditorium, Dhaka. National professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury, Chair of NLFB, hosted a WHD 2018 seminar at the Daily Star Auditorium, Dhaka. National professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury, Chair of NLFB, hosted the seminar. Prestigious Ekushey Padak winner, Prof. Mirza Mazharul Islam attended. Prof. Mohammad Ali, Founder of NLFB delivered the keynote speech. Prof. M. Anisur Rohman of NLFB, spoke on the Elimination strategy. Prof. M. A. Masud spoke on different aspects of hepatitis B and C and Dr. Shafi Uddin Mahmud on the free treatment program for young hepatitis B and C patients under NLFB’s Zakat Fund programme.

A special Television program on WHD, “ELIMINATE HEPATITIS”, broadcast on TV Channel ATN Bangla, renowned hepatologists and gastroenterologists participated.

Professor Mohammad Ali, Secretary General of NLFB, gave an interview with BBC Bangla. Popular online news outlet bdnews24.com ran a story about NLFB’s World Hepatitis Day activities. NLFB also implemented a week-long social media campaign.

Participation was noted from:
- Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific
- Comilla Liver Club
- Cox’s Bazar Medical College
- Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College
- US-Bangla Medical College and Hospital
Bhutan

The Minister of Health released a statement in the Bhutan Times, providing an overview of the progress Bhutan has made in controlling the hepatitis infection rate. The Minister said that while Bhutan was on track to eliminate hepatitis B, the country needed to focus on filling “critical gaps” to maintain a high coverage of hepatitis B vaccinations for children.

India

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and WHO Country Office in India launched the National Viral Hepatitis Control Programme, aiming to eliminate the disease in India by 2030. J. P. Nadda, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare launched the National Viral Hepatitis Control Program on the occasion. Union Minister of State for Health, Anupriya Patel, said that a national level framework had been developed which would deliver results on the ground. In addition, about 200 guests including senior government officials, development partners, UN agencies, civil society, community representatives, state government officials, private sector, research institutes and members of the press were present. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare promoted the event extensively on social media.

The event also saw the release of the Operational Guidelines for National Viral Hepatitis Control Program, National Laboratory Guidelines for Viral Hepatitis Testing and National Guidelines for Diagnosis and Management of Viral Hepatitis. Dr Samir R Shah, Founder, Trustee and Honourary Secretary General of WHA Member the National Liver Foundation, and Head of the Department of Hepatology at Global Hospital Mumbai, contributed to the Operational Guidelines’ development. Mr Manoj Sinha, Minister of State (Independent Charge) – Ministry of Communications and Minister of State, Ministry of Railways, also released a commemorative stamp to mark the day.

WHA Member Chennai Liver Foundation carried out a Find the Missing Millions-themed testing drive in multiple locations including Sai Clinic in Gummidipoondi, Government High School in Avadi, TI Cycles in Ambattur, Hopers Foundation in Redhills, Jain Hospital in Perambur, and Alliance Orchid Springs and RPS Hospitals in Korattur. They also conducted a large-scale awareness and testing campaign in a township in Ambattur consisting of almost 2,000 homes. Chennai Liver Foundation Founder, Professor R.P. Shanmugam provided commentary to the media, which was featured in a number of articles.

Asian Liver Foundation organised a motorcycle rally, balloon release and seminar.

Community Network for Empowerment (CoNE) Manipur produced a film ‘Hepatitis – An Insight’ in association with Manipur Liver Research Foundation and Coalition PLUS. They held a screening of the film at a World Hepatitis Day observance, at which they also provided free testing.

Liver Foundation, West Bengal (LFWB) held an hour-long awareness rally for hepatitis prevention, which started at the front gates of the Victoria Memorial and ended at Rotary Sadan Kolkata. Almost 500 people took part in the rally, including eminent doctors, members
of LFWB’s Hepatitis Patients’ Forum and their family members, Kolkata Police, students, sportspeople, Artists’ Forum members and the general public. After the rally, LFWB held a launch event at Rotary Sadan for their ‘Reaching the Unreachable’ campaign. Dr Ashokananda Konar, President of LFWB and Dr Abhijit Chowdhury, Secretary of LFWB, officially opened the event, and a ceremony was also held to recognise the efforts of those who had taken part in campaign actions since World Hepatitis Day 2017. In addition, LFWB organised a three-day testing camp in Sitarampur, a remote village near Purulia’s Ayodhya Hills where 415 villagers and 44 health workers were tested for hepatitis B and hepatitis C.

Rann Bhoomi Foundation organised a hepatitis B vaccination camp in Okhla Slums and shared information about the Find the Missing Millions campaign on their website and Facebook page.

Save the Liver Foundation announced that they would be organising free hepatitis screening programmes in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh states. They also shared a series of informational graphics about hepatitis on social media.

WHA Member the National Liver Foundation announced a joint partnership with the Mumbai Obstetric and Gynaecological society, aiming to protect all new-born children from contracting hepatitis B. As a result of the partnership, it is expected that Mumbai will become the first city in India to achieve universal administration of the hepatitis B vaccine at birth. The announcement received significant media coverage.

Participation was noted from:
- Aligarh Muslim University (AMU)
- Apollo Hospitals Guwahati
- BABINA Diagnostics
- Baghbazar Multipurpose Girl’s High School

Spreading awareness on viral hepatitis is a timely need.
National Liver Foundation, India

It helps us to plan events for rest of the year. It acts like a guideline.
National Liver Foundation of Bangladesh, Bangladesh
Indonesia

The Ministry of Health organised an event in Rusunawa Rawabebek Pulogebang, East Jakarta, attended by the Director General of Disease Prevention and Control at the Ministry of Health; Dr Anung Sugihantono, Director of Disease Prevention and Control at the Ministry of Health; Dr Wiendra Waworuntu, M.Kes, DKI Jakarta Welfare Assistant; Catur Laswanto, and East Jakarta Mayor; M. Anwar. Dr Anung Sugihantono appealed to Rusunawa Rawa Bebek residents to prevent the spread of hepatitis by taking precautionary measures. During an interactive dialogue session, Dr Wiendra Waworuntu, M.Kes also explained the Ministry’s policy for eliminating mother-to-child transmission of hepatitis B, HIV/AIDS, and syphilis. The event also featured testing for hepatitis B, a health exhibition and an entertainment stage.

WHA Member Persaudaraan Korban Napza Indonesia (PKNI) produced a video animation series educating their audience about the risks, modes of transmission and different types of viral hepatitis. They shared the videos on their social media channels and also posted extensively around World Hepatitis Day. PKNI also wrote an article about the current status of hepatitis treatment in Indonesia.

WHO Country Office in Indonesia re-tweeted a WHO South-East Asia tweet with information on how hepatitis B and hepatitis C are transmitted.

Participation was noted from:
- BIMC Hospital, Bali
- CEVHAP
- Iai Jawa Barat
- Ministry of Health, Kuningan South Jakarta

Maldives

WHO Representative Dr Arvind Mathur wrote an op-ed commending the Government and Ministry of Health for their efforts in fighting hepatitis and calling on the Government of Maldives, policy makers, health care providers, and civil society to unite and eliminate the disease. WHO Country Office in the Maldives also tweeted extensively around World Hepatitis Day.

Myanmar

The Ministry of Information published a statement on its website summarising World Hepatitis Day since its inauguration.

WHA Member Myanmar Liver Foundation (MLF) organised commemorations in Yangon, Myikyinar and Mawlamyaing where they offered education talks, free testing for hepatitis B and hepatitis C, and hepatitis B vaccinations. In Yangon over 400 attendees were given free testing. Short videos about hepatitis were shown and there were a number of information stands set up at the event. Pamphlets, t-shirts, and commemorative mugs were handed out, in addition to coffee and snacks. MLF arranged for the filming of a round table discussions with leading hepatologists and celebrities on their views on viral hepatitis. This was shown on television, broadcasted on radio and published in journals for awareness raising and health education.

Myanmar Liver Foundation also collaborated with WHO Country Office in Myanmar and National Hepatitis Control Programme,
Consultant Epidemiologist at the Ministry of Health, Dr Thilanga Ruwanpathirana, gave an interview with the Sunday Observer about the interventions the Ministry has taken to prevent the spread of viral hepatitis in Sri Lanka.

WHO Country Office in Sri Lanka re-tweeted a WHO South-East Asia tweet about regional prevalence of hepatitis.

Participation was noted from:
- District General Hospital, Nuwara Eliya
- Provincial General Hospital, Kurunegala

WHO Country Office in Thailand published information about World Hepatitis Day on its website and posted about the day on Facebook and Twitter.

WHA Member Thailand Hepatitis Alliance organised activities at Chulalongkorn Hospital and Nong Khai Hospital, including testing for hepatitis B and hepatitis C. Pharmacists, nurses, physiotherapists, nutritionists and health workers were also educated about hepatitis, the liver, and fibroscans. At another event at Loei hospital, about Ministry of Health and Sport to produce an awareness and advocacy video on viral hepatitis for television. Award-winning actor and director U Lu Min, also a Board Member at the Myanmar Liver Foundation, wrote the script and directed and produced the video.

Participation was noted from:
- Ministry of Health and Sport, Mawlamyine
- Myanmar Medical Association

WHO Country Office in Nepal published information about World Hepatitis Day on its website.

WHA Member Hepa Foundation (HF) held an awareness-raising rally with the theme ‘Get Treated’, starting at Dasarath Stadium in Kathmandu. HF also organised a press conference at which HF’s President, Anil Karki, announced that the organisation would be submitting a report on the status of hepatitis in Nepal to the UN to inform them about the situation in the country.

Participation was noted from:
- SPARSHA
- Nepalese Association for the studies of the Liver (NASL)
Thailand

300 people were tested for hepatitis B and hepatitis C, offered physical examinations and fibroscans, and were also provided with information about topics related to hepatitis.

Thailand Hepatitis Alliance also held an event at Srinagarind Hospital, Faculty of Medicine Khon Kaen University, attended by more than 500 people. During the event people were tested for hepatitis B and hepatitis C, received health check-ups and, in some cases, were given fibroscans. Experts also educated health workers on a number of related topics, including how to manage hepatitis and liver cancer patients, exercise and nutrition for hepatitis patients, liver investigations, and liver transplants.

Participation was noted from:
- Asian Network of People who Use Drugs (ANPUD)
- Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA)
- Office of Disease Prevention and Control

Timor-Leste

WHO Country Office in Timor-Leste tweeted about how to prevent hepatitis infection.

Participation was noted from:
- UN Timor-Leste
World Hepatitis Day presents an opportunity to maximise the focus on viral hepatitis across the globe.

Hepatitis Australia

### Participation statistics

- **15** countries participating
- **48%** of region participating
- **12** governments participating
- **7** WHO Country Offices participating
- **109,582** people attended events*
- **15,203** people tested *
- **0** people vaccinated*

### Findings by country for WHA Members, national governments and WHO Country Offices

1. Australia
2. Brunei Darussalam
3. Cambodia
4. China
5. Chinese Taipei (Taiwan)
6. Cook Islands
7. Fiji
8. Hong Kong SAR (China)
9. Japan
10. Kiribati
11. Lao People’s Democratic Republic
12. Macao SAR (China)
13. Malaysia
14. Marshall Islands
15. Micronesia
16. Mongolia
17. Nauru
18. New Caledonia (France)
19. New Zealand
20. Niue
21. Palau
22. Papua New Guinea
23. Philippines
24. Republic of Korea
25. Samoa
26. Singapore
27. Solomon Islands
28. Tonga
29. Tuvalu
30. Vanuatu
31. Vietnam

*WHERE REPORTED, NUMBERS LIKELY TO BE HIGHER

@ NO PARTICIPATION RECORD
The World Health Organization (WHO) and partners are today calling on countries to urgently increase hepatitis testing and treatment services in order to eliminate viral hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030. The calls come in the lead-up to World Hepatitis Day 2018 on 28 July, which focuses on the theme “Test.Treat.Hepatitis.”

WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in a video statement, “We have a clear vision for elimination, and we have the tools to do it. But we must accelerate progress to achieve our goal of eliminating hepatitis by 2030.”

Viral hepatitis B and C affect 325 million people around the world. Left untreated, these infections lead to liver cancer and cirrhosis, which together caused more than 1.3 million deaths in 2015 alone.

Worldwide, less than 20% of people had access to testing and treatment services for hepatitis B and C infections at the end of 2016. To mark World Hepatitis Day 2018, WHO is holding several events with the Government of Mongolia, a country that is heavily burdened by hepatitis but also a champion in the global fight.

Over 10% of Mongolia’s 3 million people are living with chronic hepatitis infection. The country started its national Healthy Liver Programme in 2017, with ambitious targets for 2020.

“Within the first year of the national programme, which targeted people aged 40–65 years, we were able to reach more than 350,000 people with hepatitis testing,” said Ms Davaajantsan Sarangerel, Minister of Health, Mongolia. “Over 70% of people diagnosed with hepatitis were provided with life-saving treatment.” The country aims to provide hepatitis B and C screening to 1.8 million people aged over 15 years.

Mongolia’s progress in the fight against hepatitis is led by political commitment and an ambitious universal health coverage agenda. The country is the first lower-middle-income country in Asia and the Pacific to commit to hepatitis elimination, by ensuring universal access and health insurance coverage for hepatitis testing and treatment for its entire population.

The Western Pacific Region has the largest number of people living with chronic hepatitis infections among the 6 WHO regions. At the end of 2015, an estimated 14 million people were living with chronic hepatitis C infection and 115 million with chronic hepatitis B infection. Every day, 1200 people in the Region die because they are unable to access effective hepatitis care.

“Eliminating hepatitis will require ongoing innovation, better medicines, and improved health services,” said Dr Gottfried Hirnschall, WHO Director for HIV and Hepatitis. “Our new recommendations should pave the way for everybody with hepatitis C to access testing and curative treatment now.”

WHO and global partners are sharing the experiences of countries such as Mongolia to promote sustained political commitment and broad-based partnerships in many other countries. Reinvigorated action and investments in viral hepatitis are necessary to achieve a world where transmission is halted and everyone living with viral hepatitis has access to safe, affordable and effective care and treatment.
The Minister for Health, Greg Hunt, announced the listing of Maviret for the treatment of hepatitis C on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and additional funding for Hepatitis Australia to continue the TEST CURE LIVE campaign for two years.

WHA Member Hepatitis Australia coordinated World Hepatitis Day in Australia, including management of the World Hepatitis Day Australia website. The WHD 2018 theme in Australia was ‘Why Miss Out?’ in reference to the fact that many people in Australia are missing out on the care they need, despite having good access to testing, vaccinations and treatment. Hepatitis Australia promoted the Why Miss Out? campaign materials extensively on social media and released a video comparing ignoring treatment advances to turning down a golden ticket. World Hepatitis Day was also implemented at the local level by Hepatitis Australia member organisations and partners. Media releases issued by Hepatitis Australia also attracted good coverage in mainstream media with an estimated 6 million people reached. Hepatitis Australia also supported implementation at the local level through the provision of small grants to member organisations and their partners.

Hepatitis NSW held an event at which Hepatitis NSW’s Chief Executive, a representative of the Kirby Institute (University of New South Wales), clinicians, and patients gave presentations about topics including Australia’s progress towards eliminating hepatitis C, barriers to treatment, and treatment. WHA Member the Australasian Society for HIV Medicine, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine was also in attendance, as well as other health stakeholders. Hepatitis NSW organised a joint event with the Exodus Foundation, providing testing for viral hepatitis, important liver checks, and fibroscans. Hepatitis NSW also ran an information line over World Hepatitis Day, and engaged with regional TV and radio, and the Sydney Morning Herald.

Hepatitis Queensland hosted a community event in Redcliffe where members of the community were invited to learn about hepatitis, play giant board games, and watch video animations. During the event, a flyover sign appeared in the sky with the message ‘Hepatitis C can be cured #Getonit’. They also filmed a Facebook Live video from the event, which included an interview with a nurse about hepatitis C treatment. Hepatitis Queensland also attended several community events including the Liver Longer Life Awareness event on Stradbroke Island and the Inala World Hepatitis Day Carpark BBQ. They also erected World Hepatitis Day banners around Brisbane Central Business District and a poster display at the Princess Alexandra Hospital in Woolongabba.

Hepatitis ACT hosted an event at Canberra Museum and Gallery aiming to examine the perspectives of people living with viral hepatitis, new community based models, and future care pathways. Hepatitis ACT also organised an awareness-raising activity in Winnunga. In addition, they held an event with Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug Using League (AIVL) where representatives of both organisations called for a needle and syringe programme in ACT prisons. Hepatitis ACT attended a BBQ at Canberra Alliance for Harm Minimisation & Advocacy (CAHMA), and also joined in World Hepatitis Day celebrations with Canberra Multicultural Community Forum and the Initiative for Women In Need.

WHA Member Hepatitis SA organised an awareness-raising event at Hollywood Plaza where they engaged members of the public and provided information on prevention, treatment and testing. Balloon twisting and henna tattooing were offered, and a fibroscan was also available for free liver scans.
Australia

Hepatitis Victoria launched its highly anticipated LiverWELL app, developed to support people living with hepatitis and liver disease. The app launch generated interest from the media and CEO, Melanie Eagle, was interviewed multiple times on the day. The weekend of World Hepatitis Day also marked the culmination of Hepatitis Victoria’s LIVERability Festival, a series of events between July and August aimed at raising the profile of viral hepatitis and the action required to eliminate it. They hosted an information stall at Springvale Snow Festival in Dandenong, and used Oliver, a liver mascot, which attracted attention from the public, particularly children and families. The StreetShot youth program held an exhibition of artwork created by “at-risk” youth at the Victoria University Gallery in Footscray.

The artwork expresses themes of prevention, harm-minimisation and promotes the elimination agenda to the broader community. The Launch of the HEP B Free program to the Melbournian Chinese community was a great success due to the support of the Melbourne City Council and the Australian Chinese Medical Association of Victoria.

Hepatitis WA showed support for Australia’s Why Miss Out? campaign and shared downloadable PDF posters for the campaign on its website. Hepatitis WA Executive Director also gave a broadcast interview to RTRFM ahead of the day. Hepatitis WA’s Workforce Development Officer hosted a discussion morning with local mental health workers about hepatitis C and mental health. They also invited anyone who visited their Needle and Syringe Program to play bingo and be automatically entered into a draw to win a gift voucher and cupcake.

Northern Territory AIDS & Hepatitis Council (NTAHC) held a ‘Love your Liver’ lunch at Alice Springs Town Council Lawns. A bouncy castle and face painting were offered to children and attendees were also given the opportunity to talk to experts about hepatitis prevention, testing, and treatment. They also supported the Why Miss Out? campaign.

Tasmanian Council on AIDS, Hepatitis and Related Diseases launched their new BloodWise BBV Awareness training programme and also supported the Why Miss Out? campaign.

Participation was noted from:
- Adelaide Local Exchange Trading System
- Adelaide PHN
- Austin Health
- Australian Chinese Medical Association of Victoria
- Bendigo Community Health
- Burnet Institute
- Canberra Multicultural Community Forum
- Centre for Social Research in Health (CSRH) University of New South Wales
- Chinese Pioneer Forum
- City of Greater Dandenong
- Cohealth
- Doherty Institute
- Gippsland & East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-Operative
- International Coalition to Eliminate HBV
- Launch Housing
- Menzies School of Health Research
- Ministry of Health, New South Wales
- Melbourne City Council
- Moogji Aboriginal Council
- East Gippsland Multicultural HIV And Hepatitis Service
- National Drug Research Institute (NDRI)
- Njernda Aboriginal Corporation
- Nova 106.9 Casanova
- NSW Users and AIDS Association
- Relationships Australia, South Australia
- Sacred Heart Mission – St Kilda
- The Salvation Army
- SHARPS – Peninsula Health
- Street Shot Exhibition
- Springvale Neighbourhood House
- Victoria University
- Winja Ulupna Women’s Recovery Centre
- Australian Injecting & illicit Drug Users League
- Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations
- Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society
- Australasian Society HIV, Viral Hepatitis and...
The National Health and Health Commission's Disease Control Bureau and WHA Member China Foundation for Hepatitis Prevention and Control (CFHPC) hosted the World Hepatitis Day Promotion Conference 2018 and the China Hepatitis Forum. A Representative of WHO Country Office in China was also present at the events. The conference theme was centred on prevention, detection and treatment of hepatitis. Professor Zhuang Hui from the Peking University School of Medicine gave a lecture on the barriers to the prevention and treatment of hepatitis in China.

WHA Member Inno Community Development Organisation re-tweeted a WHO Western Pacific tweet.

Participation was noted from:
- Affiliated Hospital of Henan Medical Science Research Institute
- Ankang Chinese Medicine Hospital
- Bajin City Second People's Hospital
- Baan CDC
- Beijing Huaxin Hospital
- Beijing Municipal CDC
- Binhai County CDC
- Chengdu Public Health Clinical Medical Center
- Chengguan Health Center
- Chinese Medical Association Liver Diseases Branch
- Chinese Preventive Medicine Association
- Department of Infectious Diseases of Guangdong Provincial People's Hospital
- Department of Infectious Diseases of Pingnan County People's Hospital
- Deqing County CDC
- Digestive Hospital of Sanmenxia Central Hospital
- Dongcheng District CDC
- Dongkan Town Center Health Center
- Enyang CDC
- Fangxian Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine
- Fengxin County
- Foxconn
- Gansu Provincial Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine
- General Electric
- Guan'au City CDC
- Guantao County Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine
- Hebei Traditional Chinese Medicine Liver Hospital
- Hedong District Education
- Hedong District Health and Family Planning Commission
- Hekou Community Health Service Center
- Heyuan City People's Hospital
- Honeywell
- Honghe CDC
- IBM
- Jian City Center for Disease Control and Prevention
- Jiaoyang County CDC
- Jinding Health Service Center
- Jintang County Second People's Hospital
- Kunming Third Hospital
- Lead Mountain County CDC
- Lenovo
- Linfu County Huafushan Hospital
- Linhe District CDC
- Linyi High-tech Hospital
- Luoshui District CDC
- Luofang Town Center
The Ministry of Health and Welfare called on the public to get tested and seek early treatment. It also announced a hepatitis C treatment trial programme prioritising mountainous areas with high-risk indicators, including Alishan Township in Chiayi County, Taoyuan District in Kaohsiung City, Xiulin Township in Hualien County, and Zhuoxi Township in Hualien County. The Ministry also said that it would work with local health bureaus to develop local screening and treatment models for hepatitis C.

Kaohsiung Research Association for the Control of Liver Disease held a public health education seminar in Kaohsiung city. Along with Chang Gung Memorial Hospital, they also jointly sponsored testing for hepatitis B and hepatitis C in Chiayi County and Tainan City Health Bureau, and proposed a new method for accurate referral.

Taiwan Liver Research Foundation (TLRF), in partnership with the Department of Hepatobiliary and Pancreatic Internal Medicine, and the Hepatitis Center of Kaohsiung Medical University Hospital, organized a free hepatitis screening event with educational talks at the Taitung MacKay Memorial Hospital. More than 400 doctors, nurses, and residents of Taitung attended the event, standing together to eliminate hepatitis in Taiwan by 2030.

On July 26th, the TLRF opened the “Liver Disease Prevention and Education Promotion Center” in both the Penghu Hospital Ministry of Health and Welfare, and the Tri-Service General Hospital Penghu Branch in Penghu, Taiwan, an offshore island grouping in Taiwan. The center focuses on the ongoing efforts of hepatitis prevention in Taiwan. The patients can access medical services with the full consulting resources of the TLRF. The event was attended by professors from Kaohsiung Medical University Hospital, including Prof. Wan-Long Chuang, Prof. Chia-Yen Dai, Prof. Ming-Lung Yu, Prof. Jee-Fu Huang and other resident physicians.

Participation was noted from:
- The Academic Foundation for Liver Disease Prevention and Control
- Erlin Christian Hospital
- Taoyuan Hospital
Hong Kong SAR (China)

To promote awareness among health care providers, the **Viral Hepatitis Preventative Service, Department of Health** organised a seminar on viral hepatitis for nurses and health professionals at the Hong Kong Central Library. The seminar covered a range of topics related to the treatment of viral hepatitis, and prevention in the healthcare environment. Roving exhibitions were also held over three separate weeks at the Immigration Centre, the Tiu Keng Leng Sports Centre, and the Kowloon Park Sports Centre to promote public awareness of viral hepatitis. The topics of the three exhibitions were: viral hepatitis and HIV, hepatitis B and, an overview of viral hepatitis.

WHA member **Asiahep HK Ltd** advertised on Mass Transit Railway (MTR) in July to September, raising awareness for Hepatitis B and offered free screening.

**Participation was noted from:**
- China-International Hepatitis Research Foundation

(Japan)

The **Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare** launched a new national hepatitis C campaign to promote awareness of hepatitis and the importance of testing, ensuring that the public has accurate knowledge of the disease, early detection and early treatment. The Ministry also announced that Japanese female pop idol group, Nogizaka 46, had been appointed as supporters of the campaign.

(Macao SAR (China))

The **Government’s Health Service** posted on its website about the national vaccination programme and called on its citizens to take steps to prevent the spread of hepatitis.

(WHO Representative to Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam and Singapore, Dr Lo Ying-Ru, called for increasing access to hepatitis C testing and treatment in Malaysia. She urged people in high-risk groups to be tested, on the basis that there is now a cure for hepatitis C. While congratulating the government for increasing the number of hospitals for treatment, Dr Lo said that the government should...
Malaysia

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develop a comprehensive national action plan on viral hepatitis, covering all aspects such as prevention, diagnosis and treatment.

Participation was noted from:
- Hepatitis Free Malaysia, University of Malaya Medical Center
- Ministry of Health, Sabah
- Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) Department of Medicine

Mongolia

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people have been diagnosed with hepatitis and more than 70 per cent of those infected have been treated. Dr Gottfried Hirnschall, Director of the HIV/AIDS Department and the Global Hepatitis Programme at WHO, urged governments and other stakeholders to increase the availability of diagnostic and treatment opportunities to achieve the goal of eliminating viral hepatitis by 2030. He also announced that WHO had issued a new International Therapeutic Treatment Guide to intensify anti-hepatitis activity and provide a cure to the 70 million people with chronic hepatitis C.

WHA Member Onom Foundation held a roundtable event.

New Caledonia (France)

The official 2018 World Hepatitis Day event was held in Sukhbaatar Square, Ulaanbaatar, organised by WHO, the Government of Mongolia, and the Ministry of Health. The Deputy Prime Minister of Mongolia and the Minister for Health both made speeches at the event, and World Hepatitis Alliance President, Michael Ninburg, attended. WHA Member Flagstaff International Relief Efforts was also in attendance. The event featured live music and a flash mob. More than 2,000 people were tested for hepatitis B and hepatitis C at the event.

The Ministry of Health and WHO also held a joint press conference two days before the event where the Minister of Health stated that over 10 per cent of Mongolia’s three million people have chronic viral hepatitis. However, the National Program for Liver Hygiene has limited the spread of viral hepatitis in Mongolia, and, by 2020, there will be no new viral hepatitis infections. As a result of the program, over 350,000...

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On World Hepatitis Day our organization can learn and share experiences with other organizations in the world.”

Kaohsiung Research Association for the Control of Liver Disease, Chinese Taipei (Taiwan)
World Hepatitis Day gives us an opportunity to raise community awareness, focuses media, governments and health organisations around the issues on a specific date, and allows for education that might not normally happen.

Hepatitis NSW, Australia
Vietnam

WHA member Vietnam Viral Hepatitis Alliance (V-VHA) organized a liver health awareness campaign in Ho Chi Minh City throughout the month of July, including a free health screening and access to care for nearly 2,000 individuals at the Reunification Palace (formerly known as Independent Palace). The campaign also included hepatitis B and C awareness messages through video clips produced with the WHO Vietnam Office; a NOhep bikeathon with local university students; street signs and banners; and health education seminars.

Participation was noted from:
- Institute for Public Health Research and Development (Union of Science and Technology Associations)
- Open University of Ho Chi Minh City

Singapore

The Ministry of Health and WHO Country Office in Singapore provided commentary to the media with statistics about hepatitis prevalence in Singapore. WHO Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam and Singapore tweeted about the day from their joint Twitter account.

Participation was noted from:
- The National Foundation of Digestive Diseases
- Nobel Gastroenterology Centre

The Ministry of Health called on people to protect themselves and their families from hepatitis and be proactive in testing for viral hepatitis and seeking early treatment.

WHA Member Supporting Community Development Initiatives (SCDI) held activities to raise awareness about hepatitis C. They also held a three-day training attended by medical students and experts from France involving group work, where they discussed solutions to help hepatitis patients with specific challenges.

WHO Country Office in Vietnam posted information about World Hepatitis Day on its website and produced an educational video about hepatitis transmission and prevention with Vietnam Viral Hepatitis Alliance, which it shared on Facebook.

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