World Hepatitis Day 2017
WHO guide on advocacy and communications

1. Unique theme and objectives

Since 2011, WHO has been collaborating with the World Hepatitis Alliance (WHA) – an umbrella civil society organization representing patient alliances – to coordinate the annual campaign for World Hepatitis Day. This year, we have agreed to commemorate the World Hepatitis Day under a joint theme: “Eliminate hepatitis”.

The 7th World Hepatitis Day on 28 July 2017 provides a historic opportunity to campaign to “Eliminate hepatitis”, as envisioned in WHO’s first “Global health sector strategy on viral hepatitis 2016–2021”, and included as the final target for hepatitis in the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030.

Activities and awareness around World Hepatitis Day are designed to:

- build and leverage political engagement, following official endorsement of the global health sector strategy on viral hepatitis at the World Health Assembly 2016;
- showcase emerging national responses in high-burden countries;
- encourage actions by individuals and the public; and
- highlight the need for a greater global response as outlined in WHO’s “Global hepatitis report, 2017”.

In support of the “Eliminate hepatitis” campaign, WHO will release new information on the national responses in 28 of the highest-burden countries accounting for 70% of the global viral hepatitis burden.

The countries are:

- Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Uganda, Viet Nam--11 countries that carry 50% of the global burden of chronic hepatitis B and C; and
- Cambodia, Cameroon, Colombia, Ethiopia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, Nepal, Peru, Philippines, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Thailand, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Zimbabwe--17 countries that also have high prevalence and developing national hepatitis responses.

On World Hepatitis Day 2017, WHO’s Health Systems and Innovation Cluster will launch new guidance documents, posters, leaflets, infographics, and videos all aimed at improving injection safety, thus helping prevention efforts needed to “Eliminate hepatitis”. These are in the context of the WHO campaign “Get the point. Make smart injection choices.”
2. Campaign identity

WHO and WHA have agreed on a common visual banner for the campaign, which is below:

![ELIMINATE HEPATITIS](image)

WHO will also prepare a campaign kit to help activities at regional and country offices. The kit includes the following materials, some of which are downloadable from Dropbox:

1. “Eliminate hepatitis” banner in 6 languages for websites and publications (.jpg) ([download](#))
2. animated version of the “Eliminate hepatitis” banners in all languages for use on websites and social media (.gif); ([download](#))
3. WHO “Eliminate hepatitis” posters with a set of key messages; (the material is undergoing final clearance and draft versions can be seen [here](#))
4. an infographic on 28 high-burden countries; (under development)
5. 28 country profiles; (under development)
7. 2 animated infographics on the global burden and gaps (source file provided for possible translation and use in regions and countries). ([download high resolution files](#) and [low resolution web versions](#))
8. A set of new resources branded “Get the point. Make smart injection choices”. ([Access materials here](#))

WHA has launched a campaign kit ([available at [www.worldhepatitisday.org](http://www.worldhepatitisday.org)]), which includes the campaign banner, as well as:

1. toolkits for the #ShowYourFace polaroid campaign; and
2. custom-made posters that can be used in various languages.

3. Key messages

WHO recognizes that there are 2 sets of key messages that can guide campaign activities.

1. The first set of messages is tailored for **policy advocacy** to affect change in agenda-setting for hepatitis at global, regional and national levels.

2. The second set of messages can be used for **behaviour change and social mobilization** campaigns to affect change at community and individual levels.

Both targeted approaches can help bring wider change and create more awareness and actions towards the elimination of hepatitis.

**Messages for policy-makers**
Viral hepatitis is a major global health problem, and needs an urgent response.

- There were approximately 325 million people living with chronic hepatitis at the end of 2015.
- Globally, an estimated 257 million people were living with hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection, and 71 million people with hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection, in 2015.

Very few of those infected accessed testing and treatment, especially in low- and middle-income countries.

- By the end of 2015, only 9% of HBV-infected people and 20% of HCV-infected people had been tested and diagnosed.
- Of those diagnosed with HBV infection, 8% (or 1.7 million people) were on treatment, while 7% (or 1.1 million people) of those diagnosed with HCV infection had started treatment in 2015.
- The global targets for 2030 are 90% of people with HBV and HCV infections tested, and 80% of eligible patients reached with treatment.

Viral hepatitis caused 1.34 million deaths in 2015 – comparable to deaths from tuberculosis, and exceeding deaths from HIV. In addition, viral hepatitis deaths are increasing.

New hepatitis infections continue to occur, mostly hepatitis C.

- The number of children under 5 living with chronic HBV infection reduced to 1.3% in 2015 (it was 4.7% before vaccines were introduced).
- Hepatitis B vaccine is preventing approximately 4.5 million infections in children each year. But, birth-dose vaccination coverage remains low in sub-Saharan Africa.
- However, 1.75 million adults were newly infected with HCV in 2015, largely due to injecting drug use and unsafe injections in health-care settings in certain countries.

Achieving the 2030 elimination goal is not a dream; reports from 28 high-burden countries give cause for optimism despite remaining challenges.

- On World Hepatitis Day 2017, WHO is publishing 28 country profiles, which show that, despite many challenges, the global effort to eliminate hepatitis is gaining ground.
- Nevertheless, major obstacles remain. (Watch this space; more information, including some figures on country action, will be released on World Hepatitis Day.)

A key action to eliminate hepatitis is to prevent its spread in health care.

- WHO recommends and supports implementation of best infection prevention and control practices to eliminate the risk of transmission through invasive procedures, such as surgery, haemodialysis, dental care and injections (http://www.who.int/infection-prevention/en/).
- Inspiring progress in implementing injections safety campaigns are being made by some heavy burden countries, such as Egypt, India and Uganda.
Another key action is to advocate for and support implementation of harm reduction services for people who use and inject drugs.

- People who inject drugs need to be provided with access to evidence based treatment such as opioid substitution therapy for people dependent on opioids, and access to testing and treatment of viral hepatitis B and C.
- Health services should ensure provision of appropriate sterile injecting equipment to people who inject drugs through needle and syringe programmes.

Messages for patients and communities

**Eliminate hepatitis. Prevent hepatitis.**

- Viral hepatitis affects 325 million people globally.
- Every year, 1.75 million people are newly infected with hepatitis C.
- Specifically, hepatitis infections are higher among certain population groups, including people who inject drugs; children and partners of people living with hepatitis; men who have sex with men; and people coinfected with HIV.
- **Know your risks and prevent hepatitis!**

**Eliminate hepatitis. Get tested.**

- 9 out of 10 people with hepatitis B are unaware of their infection.
- 8 out of 10 people with hepatitis C are unaware of their infection.
- This is due to lack of awareness and access to testing services.
- Hepatitis tests can be accessed in most countries. Get tested!

**Eliminate hepatitis. Make injection safe.**

- Avoid unnecessary and unsafe injections. Latest data show that 5% of injections in health-care settings are unsafe due to unsterilized, reused injection devices. This rate can be as high as 14% in some Eastern Mediterranean countries.
- The risk of getting hepatitis B from a contaminated syringe or needle is 30%, 3% for hepatitis C.
- One in four new HCV infections and one in three HCV deaths are attributable to injecting drug use.
- **Make injections safe in both health care settings and injecting drug use.**

**Eliminate hepatitis. Demand treatment.**

- Globally, only 8% of people with hepatitis B are treated.
- Only 7% of people with hepatitis C accessed treatment – which will fully cure the infection.
- Over 95% of people with hepatitis C can be completely cured of the virus within 3–6 months.
- **Get tested and demand treatment!**

### 4. What can you do for World Hepatitis Day?
WHO’s regional and country offices are best placed to engage partners and communities to raise awareness of hepatitis. Here are 9 actions that could be tailored to your region, country or community to enhance your plans for World Hepatitis Day 2017.

1. **Start now: initiate discussions with the focal point and other counterparts in the ministry of health (MOH)** to encourage commemorating World Hepatitis Day 2017 under the theme “Eliminate hepatitis”.

2. **Hold an event.** A high-profile event (e.g. sports activity, fun run/walk, concert, fundraiser) is the best way to rally national action, raising both political support and public awareness. Encourage the MOH and/or national hepatitis programme to organize such an event.

3. **Engage health professionals and national stakeholders.** Involving existing interest groups, such as doctors, nurses, patient groups and civil society, through a workshop is a great way to spread the word and mobilize action. If you are in one of the 28 countries highlighted in the country profiles, use the profiles to highlight your initial progress and create greater momentum to “Eliminate hepatitis” – Brazil, Cambodia, Cameroon, China, Colombia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Thailand, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Zimbabwe.

4. **Engage media.** A press conference or TV/radio programme featuring the MOH leadership and national stakeholders can raise publicity and visibility of viral hepatitis. You can use materials and messages from this guide, as well as the “Global hepatitis report, 2017”.

5. **Organize a public hepatitis testing and treatment event.** Engaging high-level leaders (e.g. presidents, ministers, celebrities, high-profile artists) to take public hepatitis tests can encourage people to step forward, get tested and share information. People are tested publicly, but their results remain confidential, unless they choose to disclose them. This approach worked in a variety of settings for earlier campaigns against HIV/AIDS.

6. **Share the communications materials** prepared by WHO’s Global Hepatitis Programme and WHA (available at www.worldhepatitisday.org) with the MOH focal point, in time for adaptation and translation, if necessary.

7. **Join the social media campaign #ShowYourFace, a polaroid “I am” campaign.** Learn more at http://www.worldhepatitisday.org/showyourface. Use the #NoHep hashtag or twitter account @NoHep, a grassroots movement to support the global elimination of hepatitis.

8. **Promote infection prevention and control in health care delivery** and the use of new WHO’s injection safety campaign tools and resources (http://www.who.int/infection-prevention/tools/injections/en/)
   - For prescribers: only prescribe injections when necessary
   - For patients: ask if there is an oral alternative available, if an injection is needed, ask for a safe injection
   - For providers: do not reuse a syringe; always use a new syringe opened from a new packet for an injection and use syringes that can be used once only.
9. **Advocate for harm reduction as an evidence-based public health response** to HIV, viral hepatitis, TB and injecting drug use. Continue to work with UNODC and partners on the implementation of recommendations in the outcome document of the 2016 United Nations General Assembly special session on the World Drug Problem. Promote implementation and scale up of harm reduction and support communities of people who inject and use drugs to have access to harm reduction services including needle and syringe programmes, opioid substitution therapy and other drug dependence treatment and hepatitis testing, treatment and care.

5. **Advocacy and communication activities: what WHO headquarters will provide**

Here is a list of events and materials to be developed in collaboration with the Department of Communications (DCO). Key focal points should be approached if country and regional staff have queries.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 June</td>
<td>“Eliminate hepatitis” campaign internal guidance with key messages developed to be sent to regional and country staff and WRs</td>
<td>HIV/GHP, Tunga Namjilsuren</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 July</td>
<td>To send a set of visual materials “Eliminate Hepatitis” in all languages</td>
<td>HIV/GHP, Tunga Namjilsuren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 15</td>
<td>Infographic and 28 country profiles to regional and country staff and WRs</td>
<td>GHP HIV/GHP, Tunga Namjilsuren</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 20</td>
<td>WHO int web features from all Regions</td>
<td>DCO, Pru Smith, Sarah Russell</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 July</td>
<td>Hepatitis website updates with campaign materials and other publications</td>
<td>HIV/GHP, Tunga Namjilsuren</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 July</td>
<td>Hepatitis factsheets updated with latest data and information</td>
<td>HIV/GHP, Tunga Namjilsuren</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 27</td>
<td>Global virtual briefing in Geneva, Global press release</td>
<td>DCO, with HIV/GHP</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 27-28</td>
<td>WHO social media, WHO staff event with “Eliminate Hepatitis” photobooth</td>
<td>DCO, with HIV/GHP</td>
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- Fact Sheet No. 340 on Hepatitis B: [http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs204/en/](http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs204/en/)
6. Share your advocacy news

Our main partner organization, WHA, reported that last year’s World Hepatitis Day campaign was commemorated in more than 150 countries. Following this tradition, we would appreciate if all country and regional offices could inform us about their events and activities. This will help us coordinate website linkages and create an overview report on best cases and lessons learnt, to build experiences for next year’s campaign.

Please email the focal point:
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