THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS IN THE ELIMINATION OF VIRAL HEPATITIS IN EUROPE: ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES AND THE WAY FORWARD

PERSPECTIVE OF THE ACHIEVE SECRETARIAT

Provided at the VHPB Technical Meeting
5-6 April 2023, Antwerp

ACHIEVE

ASSOCIATIONS COLLABORATING ON HEPATITIS TO IMMUNIZE AND ELIMINATE THE VIRUSES IN EUROPE

ACHIEVE COALITION – OVERVIEW

Associations **C**ollaborating on **H**epatitis to **I**mmunize and **E**liminate the **V**iruses in **E**urope

WHAT?

Stakeholders in viral hepatitis, representing **patients** and **community**, **clinicians** and **researchers**, come together to speak with **one voice**, to **advocate** for EU support**viral hepatitis elimination** in Europe.

WHO?

Co-Chairs: Luis Mendão (EATG), Ivana Dragojevic (ELPA), George Kalamitsis (LPI)
Full members: Viral Hepatitis Prevention Board, European Liver Patients' Association, Liver Patients' International, Correlation Network, European Aids Treatment Group, World Hepatitis Alliance, ISGlobal **Observers:** EASL, WHO Europe, ECDC **Co-Sponsors:** AbbVie, Abbott, Cepheid, Gilead

WHY?

The 2016 WHO Global Strategy and the WHO Europe Action Plan set the **elimination goal for hepatitis by 2030**, but many Member States do not appear to have the fight against viral hepatitis on their radar screen. **ACHIEVE** aims to create a **political urgency at the EU and national level** to ensure that the **WHO goal** will be met.

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FIRST SUCCESSES: 2017-2018

Recognition of viral hepatitis elimination in a European Parliament Resolution, June 2017, "EU's response to HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Hepatitis C"

VHPB ACHIEVE Joint Meeting "Elimination of Viral Hepatitis in Romania: Lessons learnt and the way forward" in Bucharest in **May 2018**, ahead of Romanian EU Council Presidency, H1 2019 – Hep then mentioned in an informal meeting of Health Ministers

ACHIEVE Viral Hepatitis Elimination Policy event in the European Parliament with high level panellists from ECDC, EMCDDA, WHO Europe, Romanian and German Ministries of Health, keynote by adviser to the Croatian Minister of Health

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2019 / 2020 A NEW EU LEGISLATURE & A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

VON DER LEYEN EUROPEAN COMMISSION – FOCUS ON:

Cancer, including Cancer Prevention

UN SDGs

COVID 19 PANDEMIC INDIRECT IMPACT ON EU HEALTH POLICY MAKING E.G.

EU4Health – New Public Health Funding Programme

ECDC Mandate Extension

New Global Health Strategy

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FOCUS AREAS SINCE 2019 & KEY MESSAGES

EUROPE'S BEATING CANCER PLAN — Hepatitis B childhood vaccination is not enough: close the vaccination gap, educate, improve diagnosis and linkage to care for hep. B and C to prevent cancer.

EU4HEALTH — It is not only about NCDs: EU4Health funding must also support communicable dieases and hepatitis elimination.

GOOD PRACTICES — Good practices exist and must be emulated.

ECDC MANDATE — A new ECDC mandate must not only serve the fight against next pandemic, but also prevalent viral diseases, such as viral hepatitis.

EU GLOBAL SUPPORT — The EU must set to set a good example and support elimination globally.

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PRIORITIES FOR ACHIEVE ADVOCACY 2023

New EU Public Health Expert Group (PHEG), coordinated by **European Commission**, includes **EU / EEA representatives of Health Ministries**: Advocate for inclusion of hepatitis best practice exchange in work programme of PHEG. Opportunity to submit best practice examples for validation by JRC

Europe's Beating Cancer Plan Flagship Initiatives: Advocate for inclusion of viral hepatitis new European Cancer Code, Council Recommendation on vaccine preventable cancers, Cancer Inequalities Registry.

EU4Health: Advocate for further funding opportunities to drive forward viral hepatitis related elimination, e.g. Joint Action on Cancer Prevention, 2023 Grants to WHO and IOM to ensure healthcare for refugees

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ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES & THE WAY FORWARD

Coalition approach:
"Speaking with one voice"

Positioning of viral hepatitis in the context of EU efforts to prevent Cancer

Reference to available evidence (ECDC, WHO, IARC)

Resonance at EU Member State Level – EU is about hub & spoke

Short term memory of policymakers and stakeholders

A full EU health agenda and limited personnel at DG SANTE

Ensure Traction in EU Member States

Get out of the Hepatitis Niche: Cancer Prevention, Inequalities, Support for vulnerable populations etc

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