

# WORLD HEPATITIS ALLIANCE SUPPORTS EFFORTS TO INCREASE THE DIAGNOSIS OF VIRAL HEPATITIS

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London- England

**A new digital tool released today (20 June) will support advocacy efforts to find the 290 million people who are unaware that they are living with viral hepatitis.**

Viral hepatitis (consisting of hepatitis A,B,C,D and E) presents a major global health challenge, killing 1.34 million people every year, more than HIV or Malaria. Yet, with a vaccine and effective treatments for hepatitis B and a cure for hepatitis C, these deaths are preventable. In 2016 the World Health Organization and its 194 member states signed up to eliminate the disease by 2030 but, as 9 in 10 people living with the disease are unaware of their diagnosis, action must be taken to find the missing millions and link them to care.

The online tool has been developed by the World Hepatitis Alliance, an international umbrella organisation with over 270 members in 91 countries, in collaboration with leading experts, stakeholders and people living with viral hepatitis.

Cary James, CEO of the World Hepatitis Alliance said:

“No one should have to live with viral hepatitis unaware, yet millions of people do, without a massive scale-up in screening, diagnosis and linkage to care, viral hepatitis will continue to spread. This new resource is a critical tool that civil society and the affected community can use to advocate for governments to prioritise finding those living with viral hepatitis unaware and to link them to the care they need.”

The new resource, launched at the first African Hepatitis Summit in Uganda, mixes expert advice with practical examples from people and organisations that have successfully implemented projects that have resulted in an increase in diagnosis.

Patricia Velez-Moller, President of the Guatemala Liver Patients Association, one of the organisations featured on the tool said:

“Often the advice available for advocates is very academic and is difficult to turn into on the ground action. This tool gives us up to date information with the ability to translate learnings into real action which will help us to reach more people.”

The new tool is available in multiple languages and will be continually updated with information and case studies to enable the spread and transfer of information and ideas globally.

## About WHA

The World Hepatitis Alliance is an international umbrella organisation with over 270 members in 91 countries. Patient-led and patient-driven, WHA represents the 320 million people living with viral hepatitis worldwide. The Alliance strives to support and promote patient voices, to raise the profile of viral hepatitis and to establish comprehensive hepatitis

strategies in all countries. Through better awareness, prevention, care, support and access to treatment, the ultimate goal is to work with governments to eliminate these diseases by 2030.

### **Suggested tweets**

.@hep\_alliance has launched its #FindtheMissingMillions Advocacy Resource, an online tool supporting civil society to overcome the barriers to the diagnosis of viral hepatitis. Take a look at <http://bit.ly/2DKuj8R>