



## PRINCIPLE 2

### DISCUSSION GUIDE: THE BURDEN OF VIRAL HEPATITIS

This guide has been developed to remind you of key messages and data to enable effective conversations with peers and colleagues around the burden of viral hepatitis.

#### WHAT IS THE GLOBAL BURDEN OF VIRAL HEPATITIS?

Viral hepatitis (including types A–E) is responsible for **1.34 million deaths annually** (including liver cancer, acute liver failure, and cirrhosis)<sup>1</sup>

- This **exceeds deaths** from **tuberculosis** (1.2 million), **HIV/AIDS** (1 million) or **malaria** (719,000)<sup>2</sup>
- Unlike tuberculosis, HIV or malaria, the number of **deaths due to viral hepatitis is on the increase**<sup>1</sup>
- **96%** of all **hepatitis-related deaths** are attributed to **hepatitis B** or **hepatitis C** infections.<sup>1</sup>

**Hepatitis B** and **hepatitis C** are life-threatening infectious diseases that cause **serious liver damage, half of all new liver cancer cases**, and are responsible for **1 in 12 cancer deaths**.<sup>3</sup>

#### GLOBALLY:<sup>1</sup>

- ~ **257 million** people live with **hepatitis B**
- ~ **71 million** people live with **hepatitis C**

Only **20%** of people living with **hepatitis C** and less than **10%** living with **hepatitis B** are **aware of their condition**<sup>1</sup>

#### WHO IS AFFECTED BY VIRAL HEPATITIS?

Viral hepatitis affects people from all walks of life, and not just those in low- and middle-income countries

- Viral hepatitis may hit children and marginalized populations the hardest<sup>3</sup>
- Hepatitis B often spreads unnoticed from mother-to-child at birth
- As many as 90% of infants who acquire hepatitis B infection from their mothers at birth or in infancy become chronically infected<sup>4</sup>
- Millions of people are infected via unsterilised equipment and unscreened blood transfusions, disproportionately affecting those in low- and middle-income countries<sup>3</sup>
- Stigmatised or marginalised groups are hard-hit, including those living with HIV, people who inject drugs, migrants, and indigenous populations, who often have poor access to care<sup>1,3</sup>

#### WHAT WOULD THE ELIMINATION OF VIRAL HEPATITIS MEAN?

The elimination of viral hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030 will:

- Save 10 million lives by 2030<sup>5,3</sup>
- Strengthen healthcare systems and support progress towards the World Health Organization's Sustainable Development Goals<sup>6</sup>
- Reduce inequalities and enhance lives, ensuring healthy futures and reducing stigma and discrimination<sup>3</sup>
- Realise cost savings for many countries, for example by reducing the levels of liver cancer and the need for liver transplants, and protect patients against catastrophic healthcare costs and productivity losses<sup>3</sup>

1. World Health Organization, Global Hepatitis Report, 2017.

2. World Hepatitis Alliance. Press release, 15 Sept 2017.

Available at: [www.worldhepatitisalliance.org/news/sep-2017/viral-hepatitis-kills-more-people-hiv-malaria-or-tuberculosis](http://www.worldhepatitisalliance.org/news/sep-2017/viral-hepatitis-kills-more-people-hiv-malaria-or-tuberculosis) (accessed June 2018);

3. Gore C, et al. Lancet Gastroenterology & Hepatology 2017;2:843–5

4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Epidemiology and Prevention of Vaccine-Preventable Diseases, 13th Edition. Hepatitis B.

Available at: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/hepb.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/hepb.html) (accessed June 2018).

5. World Hepatitis Alliance. 2017 Brief Update.

Available at: [www.worldhepatitisalliance.org/sites/default/files/resources/documents/20170908\\_wha\\_brief\\_updated.pdf](http://www.worldhepatitisalliance.org/sites/default/files/resources/documents/20170908_wha_brief_updated.pdf) (accessed June 2018).

6. World Hepatitis Alliance. Sustainable Development Goals.

Available at: [www.worldhepatitisalliance.org/sustainable-development-goals-sdgs](http://www.worldhepatitisalliance.org/sustainable-development-goals-sdgs) (accessed June 2018).

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