

Find The Missing Millions.

A message to members of the World Hepatitis Alliance on the occasion of World Hepatitis Day, 28 July 2019

World Hepatitis Day is the one day when the world unites to celebrate the progress made towards the elimination of viral hepatitis. Progress that has only been possible thanks to you, the community of people affected by viral hepatitis. This is the day to combine our voices to raise awareness for the 325 million people living with hepatitis B and hepatitis C.

World Hepatitis Day also gives us time to pause and reflect on the countless lives lost to viral hepatitis. 1.4 million people die each year because of these diseases, despite there being a vaccine and effective treatment for hepatitis B and a cure for hepatitis C. It is important to look beyond that hard statistic and remember that each person was an individual - a friend, a family member, a colleague, a loved one. And every single death was preventable.

Millions of lives are still at risk simply because people are unaware that they are living with viral hepatitis. This year on World Hepatitis Day the World Hepatitis Alliance is encouraging you to help Find the Missing Millions - those people living with viral hepatitis who remain undiagnosed. To do this we need to raise awareness and to encourage people to get tested. World Hepatitis Day provides the platform to spread the message that viral hepatitis is a global health crisis, but one that can be overcome. With a concerted multi-stakeholder effort that includes engagement with those affected by viral hepatitis we can ensure that no one is left behind and achieve elimination.

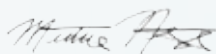
In 2016 every country in the world committed to eliminating viral hepatitis by 2030. Since then, 124 countries have developed, or are developing, elimination strategies. Yet many of these strategies do not have dedicated funding. Achieving hepatitis elimination by 2030 will require a major increase in funding for hepatitis prevention, testing and treatment services, as well as including hepatitis services in Universal Health Coverage efforts.

We have the tools to eliminate these diseases and we are fighting for the resources. I believe that together, we will achieve the elimination of viral hepatitis. And it is my sincere hope that World Hepatitis Day serves as a catalyst for action.

Whatever you have planned to recognize this day, your actions will help to save lives. That cannot be commended highly enough.

Thank you for your commitment and we wish you a very successful World Hepatitis Day!

Best Wishes,



Michael Ninburg
President, World Hepatitis Alliance