

May 19, 2008 dedicated as World Hepatitis Day!

Almost 200 patient groups have now signed-up to support World Hepatitis Day and we have representatives from Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Croatia, Egypt, France, Germany, Guatemala, Hong Kong, Italy, Korea, Libya, Malaysia, Mali, Morocco, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Tunisia, UK, US, Vietnam and most recently Bangladesh. worldhepday@fleishman.com.

Am I Number 12?

The campaign platform for WHD 2008 is 'Am I Number 12?'; its logo was developed to be easily recognizable and to translate well into most languages. The concept was designed not only to communicate the incredible statistic that **one in 12 people worldwide have viral hepatitis B or C** - far higher than the prevalence of HIV or any cancer - but also to encourage people to question themselves and get tested. This inclusive theme is intended to combat the stigma often associated with hepatitis B and C by highlighting the extent of hepatitis infection across the world in a memorable way. The campaign is applicable to both public and policy initiatives. With a politically compelling and visually striking campaign, we hope to 'own' the news agenda on 19 May, 2008 and give WHD the place it deserves on the world stage.

Nobel Laureate joins WHD Advisory Board

The expert reference group that will inform and guide the Alliance is off to a flying start with the appointment of Nobel Prize Winner in Physiology or Medicine, Professor Baruch Blumberg. Professor Blumberg, who was awarded the 1976 Nobel Prize for discovering the hepatitis B virus and the invention of the HBV vaccine, is the first member appointed to the Public Health Panel. Recruitment of key specialists from across the world is ongoing, with the second confirmed member leading Australian epidemiologist and infectious diseases specialist, Professor Greg Dore. Professor Dore has an established international reputation in defining the natural history of hepatitis C infection and development of therapeutic strategies for acute and chronic hepatitis C. The Panel will comprise 10 to 12 members in total, all of whom will have significant experience in hepatitis and/or large public health campaigns.

New Mexico Hepatitis C Alliance is Part of WHD

The New Mexico Hepatitis C Alliance has joined with the WHD campaign with a number of activities around New Mexico. We along with many other groups and

organizations have joined forces to raise awareness through print, radio, television, being present at many events and functions, and talking to our representatives both in Santa Fe and in Washington, DC. There has been significant movement towards changing attitudes and raising awareness both in the public and the government sectors.

Hepatitis C

Hepatitis C is a virus that affects more than 180 million people worldwide,

180 million people worldwide, 130 million of whom are estimated to be chronically infected. In 2000 the WHO estimated that approximately 3 to 4 million people are newly infected every year.

Like hepatitis B, the hepatitis C virus is known as a 'silent killer' and people can live with the virus for many years without significant symptoms or knowing they are infected. During this time, people may spread the virus to others. Left untreated over a number of years the virus can lead to scarring of the liver (cirrhosis), and in some cases to liver failure and ultimately death.

Hepatitis C is mainly spread through blood-to-blood contact and, similarly to hepatitis B, symptoms can include:

- Nausea
- Fatigue
- Aching muscles and joints
- Anxiety and depression
- Poor concentration
- Stomach ache
- Loss of appetite

A positive attitude may not solve all your problems, but it will annoy enough people to make it worth the effect.

Herm Albright (1876 – 1944)



NEW MEXICO
HEPATITIS C
ALLIANCE

OUR MISSION:
To live in a world free of hepatitis C virus (HCV)

OUR VISION:
To promote collaboration among individual, community, state and national policymakers to ensure universal education and access to prevent, manage & cure HCV infection and support all affected by hepatitis C

September is right around the corner. Please think about what position you may want to take on the New Mexico Hepatitis C Alliance Board. There are some positions that are going to be open for nomination and voting. Get in contact with a board member to find out how to run for an position on the board. This is your opportunity to learn something new from some of the seasoned members on the board. Gavriela made it look so easy.

As interim president, I have had some new experiences. I make up the agenda, run the monthly meetings, fill in gaps where necessary, plus learn new types of information regarding 501(c)3 status, submitting paperwork to the IRS, bank account information, and other skills.

The Alliance has gotten the word out through awareness in various venues around the state. We also participated in the first ever World Hepatitis Day May 19, 2008. This was really exciting. A bulletin board, news men, a webinar, and TV doctor presented information during the month of May about hepatitis. It's unclear how many people were reached, it is always unclear the number of people that are reached through the awareness events. A total number of persons that stop by the table is kept but how effective is this type of outreach. It is unclear.

I spoke to the Missouri Hepatitis C Alliance President and she mentioned that usually small amounts of people do most of the work (that's the way it is in a lot of organizations) for a particular cause. She suggested that the NM Hepatitis C Alliance attempt to find venues that will get the word out to large amounts of people with the least effort. In Missouri they received free advertising by using billboards along the road and they received a lot of response from this effort.

Here is some information about the special members of this year's board.

Yolanda Herrera, RN, Board Member

She has brought a lot of gusto into the board and assisted with the idea to join forces with other organizations through out the State of New Mexico. This month we are joining forces with other organizations to become a cohesive diverse group of volunteers working together. With the collective of our own missions, we have the ability of increasing our strength by the increase in numbers. Yolanda is a bright sparkle that is able to take on a project and get it completed by total organization and management. She helped put together an awesome quarterly meeting (our first ever).

Stephani Patten, Chairman of Advocacy Committee

She has been instrumental in holding the board together by sheer perseverance and gracious passion. Her heart is in hepatitis C. She is and will be a force to help change the concept of hepatitis C. She spoke to some key government officials in Washington, DC and advocated for some important bills. She continues to maintain the web site and assist in helping other board members when needed. She mentioned a fund raiser in which motorcyclists road to various locations and picked up a card to put together a poker hand, this event was sponsored by a motorcycle store.

Rachel Pacheco, RN, Board Member

She has brought awareness to the American Indian Pueblos all over New Mexico. Her honest, direct approach, sprinkled with determination and unlimited enthusiasm is making a difference for this population.

Benjamin Corsey, III, Secretary

He is an enthusiastic, happy person and he has shown great leadership as Secretary. He is cheerful and helpful, very willing to coordinate letter campaigns in the round house, and calling campaigns, and uses his talents to put together the monthly board meeting minutes.

Julie Morrow, RN, Board Member

She lives in Roswell where she calls into the meetings. She is going into the prison systems and teaching about hepatitis C in Roswell. She always has a kind word to say, and is willing to help out whenever she can. She is humorous and passionate about hepatitis C.

Gavriela de Boer, Board Member

She is the recent past president and is making the second quilt that she designed. A work of art with no replicas. She has been missed by all and many board members and members are ready for her return. She is passionate about wiping out hepatitis C in New Mexico. She is a visionary leader and is still assisting with the newsletter, designing and making pamphlets. She is an extraordinary artist. The first quilt has been a huge success.

Terry Holmes, RN, Board Member

He is a force in helping to get the conference room reserved and is a great salesman. He knows how to sell a product. He is very professional and dedicated to helping out in anyway possible with awareness. He has numerous influential contacts in the state of New Mexico that are assisting in moving the cause of awareness forward.

Kory Montoya, Board Member

He was on the cover of POZ magazine bringing awareness of two infections, Hepatitis C and HIV. He is supportive of activities of the Alliance and has past board experience from other organizations. He brings this knowledge and skills and shares them with the board.

Karen Gonzalez, Board Member

She has been instrumental in assisting to coordinate World Hepatitis Day Activities throughout the state. She is an expert hepatitis coordinator and she is an original member of the Hepatitis C Alliance as she helped give birth to the Alliance. She has been an enthusiastic participant in many events.

Rosemary Taylor, Treasurer

She is fantastically enthusiastic. She presents a positive outlook to all about hepatitis C, through her experiences and her participation in awareness events.

Please recognize these influential board members when ever you can. They work extremely hard for the membership of the Alliance and all future members of the Alliance. There is not enough space to write about all of the jobs, that this board has done. Each one of you is truly an exceptional member of society.

Wiping Out Hep C in New Mexico is published quarterly by the New Mexico Hepatitis C alliance, Inc. The newsletter is also accessible on our website, www.nmhepc.org. The Alliance is organized and incorporated under the laws of the State of New Mexico as a non-profit corporation for charitable, educational, and scientific purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, without profit to any officer or director. Lucinda Yates, President; R. Holly Taylor, Treasurer; Benjamin Corsey III, Secretary; Karen Gonzales; Yolanda Herrera, Kory Montoya, Julie Morrow; and Rachel Pacheco; To contribute an article or a letter to the editor, please email us at info@nmhepc.org or send to NMHCA, P.O. Box 6601, Albuquerque, NM 87197.