Introduction to the VHPB

Viral Hepatitis Prevention Board

VHPB
The Viral Hepatitis Prevention Board

19 years of support to the control and prevention of viral hepatitis in Europe.
• Mission statement

The objective of VHPB is to contribute to the control and prevention of viral hepatitides:
- by drawing the attention to this important public health problem
- by issuing prevention guidance and catalyse the development of recommendations, and
- by encouraging actions to improve control and prevention.

Focus audiences are, in first instance, opinion leaders, policymakers, and health care professionals.
VHPB Structure

- **VHPB advisory board** is composed of independent experts in the field of viral hepatitis

- Honorary members

- Executive secretariat based at the VAXINFECTIO unit of the University of Antwerp
  - Emmy Engelen
  - Greet Hendrickx
  - Alex Vorsters
  - Pierre Van Damme
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>Academic/University</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nedret Emiroğlu</td>
<td>Selim Badur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHO Regional Office for Europe</td>
<td>Istanbul, Turkey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steven Wiersma</td>
<td>Paolo Bonanni</td>
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<tr>
<td>WHO Headquarters</td>
<td>Florence, Italy</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECDC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marita Van de Laar</td>
<td>Wolfgang Jilg</td>
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<td>ECDC, Sweden</td>
<td>Regensburg, Germany</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDC</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Ward</td>
<td>Françoise Roudot-Thoraval</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDC, USA</td>
<td>Paris, France</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELPA (European Liver Patient Association)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tatjana Reic</td>
<td>Rui Tato Marinho</td>
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<tr>
<td>European Liver Patient Association (ELPA)</td>
<td>Lisbon, Portugal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Health Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hans Blystad</td>
<td>Koen Van Herck</td>
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<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>Antwerp, Belgium</td>
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<tr>
<td>David Goldberg</td>
<td>Alessandro Zanetti</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>Milan, Italy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mira Kojouharova</td>
<td>Vana Papaevangelou</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sofia, Bulgaria</td>
<td>Goudi, Greece</td>
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<tr>
<td>Johannes Hallauer</td>
<td>Germany</td>
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These honorary members are elected for a lifelong term and are invited to VHPB meetings on an ad hoc basis.
Support and Grants

• supported by
  – **unrestricted** grants from the vaccine industry GlaxoSmithKline Biologicals, Sanofi Pasteur MSD, Sanofi Pasteur and Merck
  – several universities and other institutions in Europe
  – VHPB received in the past for their activities in CEE and NIS funds from GAVI fund, CVP at PATH, Unicef, CDC, WHO
VHPB ACTIVITIES
2-3 meetings/year
(technical - country)
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Country – March</th>
<th>Technical – November</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012: 22-23 March</td>
<td>2012: 15-16 Nov</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arctic Polar region (Denmark)</td>
<td>How to reach Health Care Workers (HCW)</td>
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<td>2013: 21-22 March</td>
<td>2013: 14-15 Nov</td>
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<td>Israel</td>
<td>2014: 13-14 Nov (TBC)</td>
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<td>2014: 20-21 March (TBC)</td>
<td>2015: 19-20 Nov (TBC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015: 19-20 March (TBC)</td>
<td>2015: 19-20 Nov (TBC)</td>
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Meetings and Guidelines

The VHPB has already covered a broad range of control and prevention strategies for all forms of hepatitis

- Surveillance
- Universal Immunisation programs
- Injection safety and safe blood supply
- HBV mutants and variants
- Prevention and control of viral hepatitis in migrants and refugees
- Behavioural issues in hepatitis B vaccination
- How to reach risk groups
- Combined vaccines
- Economic evaluations
- Hepatitis B vaccination safety issues
- Hepatitis B vaccine and long term efficacy
- Hepatitis infections in health care workers
- Perinatal transmission
- Adolescent programmes
- Patient and advocacy groups
- Hepatitis A and E
- Identification and management of persons with chronic viral hepatitis
- Hepatitis B booster policy

The VHPB has already covered a broad range of control and prevention strategies for all forms of hepatitis.
Country meetings

- Italy 2002
- Germany and the Nordic Countries 2003
- France 2004
- UK 2005
- Spain 2006
- Greece 2007
- The Netherlands 2008
- Turkey 2009
- Portugal 2010
- Bulgaria 2011
- Arctic 2012
Publications

Viral hepatitis

- 2 issues/ Year
- Distributed :
  - Pdf on website
  - Mailing to ± 3600 readers
Publications
Scientific publications

Has the time come to control hepatitis A globally? Matching prevention to the changing epidemiology

Centre for the Evaluation of Vaccination, Vaccine and Infectious Disease Institute, University of Antwerp, Antwerp, Belgium.

SUMMARY. For the first time a global meeting on hepatitis A virus (HAV) infection as vaccine preventable disease was organised at the end of 2007. More than 200 experts from 46 countries gathered to investigate the changing global HAV epidemiology reflecting the increasing number of persons at risk for severe clinical disease and mortality from HAV infection. The benefits of childhood and adult hepatitis A (HepA) vaccination strategies and the data needed to individual countries and international health organisations to assess current HepA prevention strategies were discussed. New approaches in preventing HAV infection including universal HepA vaccination were considered. This introductory paper summarises the major findings of the meeting and describes the changing epidemiology of HAV infections and the impact of HepA vaccination strategies in various countries. Implementation of HepA vaccination strategies should take into account the level of endemicity, the level of the socio-economic development and sanitation, and the risk of outbreaks. A stepwise strategy for introduction of HepA universal immunisation of children was recommended. This strategy should be based on accurate surveillance of cases and qualitative documentation of outbreaks and their control, secure political support on the basis of high-quality results, and comprehensive cost-effectiveness studies. The recognition of the need for increased global attention towards HepA prevention is an important outcome of this meeting.

Key words: Global hepatitis A meeting, hepatitis A, hepatitis A vaccination, infectious disease control, public health, surveillance.

3 – 4 peer reviewed publications/year
Web site www.vhpb.org

- Web site
  - Overview of the VHPB
  - Shows all previous recommendations, guidelines and consensus statements
  - All *Viral Hepatitis* issues as of 1996 can be downloaded
  - Presentations of VHPB meetings are on-line since 2001 (>374 presentations of in total >471 documents)
  - Formally approved by WHO Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety
VHPB news

VHPB endorses the first official World Hepatitis Day (28 July) of the World Health Organization (WHO).

In May 2010 the World Health Assembly adopted the viral hepatitis resolution WHA 63.18, calling for an official WHO sponsored World Hepatitis Day. From now on this WHO sponsored World Hepatitis Day will take place Thursday 28th of July, Professor Baruch Blumberg’s birthday. This date is very appropriate to put viral hepatitis in the spotlight as Professor Blumberg received in 1972 a chaired Nobel Prize for his research leading to the discovery of the hepatitis B virus and allowing the development of the hepatitis B vaccine.

The World Hepatitis Day provides the opportunity to increase the awareness, understanding and prevention of viral hepatitis and its related diseases in all WHO member states. With more than 20 years’ experience in increasing awareness of viral hepatitis among healthcare workers, policymakers and opinion leaders, the VHPB recognizes the importance and relevance of this initiative and fully supports the overall objectives of the World Hepatitis Day. We hope that the campaign “Hepatitis affects everyone, everywhere. Know it. Confront it. Protect yourself.” will have a major global impact on the general awareness of Viral Hepatitis.

More information and promotional material in different languages is accessible on www.worldhepatitisday.info

Viral Hepatitis, Volume 19, Number 2, prepared from material presented at the 58th Annual VIRAL HEPATITIS PREVENTION BOARD (VHPB) Meeting, New Orleans, LA, USA, June 2010.
Involvement in other meetings

• ECDC Technical Expert group
• ETAGE (European Technical Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization)
• SAGE (Strategic Advisory Groupe of Experts on Immunization)
• Input in the scientific content of the “Summit Conference on Hepatitis B and C in the Mediterranean and Balkan countries” in Nicosia, Cyprus in December 2012
• Other scientific meetings
VHPB History

- Since 1992, 19 years of experience
- 37 issues of Viral Hepatitis
- Meetings: 37 VHPB meetings, 3 EE/NIS meetings, 1 global HAV meeting
- Board members: 35 representing 17 different countries
- Peer reviewed publications: more than 80