



Prevention and control of viral hepatitis:

The role and impact of patient and advocacy groups in and outside Europe.

**Viral Hepatitis Prevention Board
European Liver Patient Association Meeting
Lucca, Italy, March 13-14, 2008**

The Viral Hepatitis Prevention Board

16 years of support to the control and prevention
of viral hepatitis in Europe.

Content

- Viral Hepatitis Prevention Board (VHPB)
- VHPB activities
- Hepatitis B control in Europe

Viral Hepatitis Prevention Board

- The objective of VHPB is to contribute to the control and prevention of viral hepatitis
 - by drawing the attention to this important public health problem
 - by issuing prevention guidelines
 - and by encouraging actions to improve control and prevention.
- VHPB focus audiences are, in first instance, opinion leaders, policymakers, and health care professionals.

Viral Hepatitis Prevention Board

- VHPB is established in 1992. First actions related to hepatitis B as an occupational risk.
- World Health Assembly sets in 1992 Hepatitis B Vaccination targets on the integration of hepatitis B vaccine into national childhood vaccination programmes.
- In 1993, VHPB started a second major initiative and focused on hepatitis B as a community health risk.
- The geographical focus was initially Western Europe, its actions are extended to include all 53 countries in the WHO/EURO

Viral Hepatitis Prevention Board

- members
 - CDC, WHO/HQ, WHO/EURO, MOH, Universities
- network of experts

Viral Hepatitis Prevention Board

- Meetings
 - 2 - 3 meetings/year
- *Viral Hepatitis* Newsletter
 - 2 issues/year
 - mailing to apr. 4500 readers
- Web site
- Scientific publications
- Participation at Scientific Meetings



VIRAL HEPATITIS

PUBLISHED BY THE VIRAL HEPATITIS PREVENTION BOARD (VHPB)

April 2006
Volume 14 - Number 2

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	1
Prevention of viral hepatitis in the United Kingdom: setting the scene	2
Public health structure and decision making in the United Kingdom	2
National strategies for prevention and control of hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and hepatitis C virus infection in the United Kingdom: an overview	3
Prevention and control of hepatitis B in the United Kingdom	3
Hepatitis B virus biology	3
Clinical aspects of hepatitis B and treatment options	4
Epidemiology and surveillance of hepatitis B in the United Kingdom	5
Hepatitis B prevention: current practice in the United Kingdom	6
Hepatitis B prevention: economic aspects	7
Prevention and control of hepatitis C in the United Kingdom	9
Hepatitis C virus infection: epidemiology, surveillance, and modelled burden of disease	9
Hepatitis C prevention and treatment: United Kingdom national strategy and current practice, including assessment of regional programmes	10
Prevention and control of hepatitis A

Editorial

This issue of *Viral Hepatitis* reviews the topics covered at the Viral Hepatitis Prevention Board (VHPB) autumn meeting held on November 17-18, 2005 in Edinburgh, United Kingdom (UK). The aim of the meeting was to review the current UK practice relating to the control of viral hepatitis. Health policy, healthcare delivery, decision-making, research, and funding in England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland were examined, in particular with regards to their implementation at national level. An update on the epidemiological situation of hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and hepatitis C in the UK was provided. Specific aspects of viral hepatitis were discussed, including virological and clinical aspects, control measures, public health perspectives, and economic evaluations. Preventive national and regional strategies for the control of viral hepatitis in the UK were then presented and assessed, including testing, vaccination, and treatment options. The meeting was concluded with lessons learnt from the UK experience and future challenges to be met.

Control of viral hepatitis in the UK - achievements and challenges

With regards to the decision-making process ensuring prevention of viral hepatitis, the need was recognised for a continuous evaluation of the current risk-group vaccination policy, to be compared with results obtained with alternative strategies, such as universal vaccination programmes, in other comparable countries of the European Union. The need to carefully monitor such alternative strategies implemented at the regional level in the UK was recognised. The need to target specific groups, such as immigrant populations, in preventive programmes and treatment was also identified.

In terms of chronic disease management, discussions focussed on the need for national strategy and action plan in the case of hepatitis B while the establishment of Managed Clinical Networks (MCNs) should be ensured in the case of hepatitis C.

The control of viral hepatitis in the United Kingdom was also seen to be lacking a reliable surveillance system, based on standard laboratory reporting and case notifications. The need for enhanced epidemiological data was mentioned in or-

Viral Hepatitis Prevention Board

- Meetings
 - 2 - 3 meetings/year
- *Viral Hepatitis* Newsletter
 - 2 issues/year
 - mailing to apr. 4500 readers
- Scientific publications
- Participation at Scientific Meetings
- Web site

Web site www.vhpb.org

- Web site
 - Overview of the VHPB
 - Show all previous recommendations and consensus statements
 - All *Viral Hepatitis* issues as of 1996 can be downloaded
 - Presentations of VHPB meetings are on-line since 2001 (284 presentations of in total 366 documents)



VIRAL HEPATITIS PREVENTION BOARD

New !! subscribe online to the VHPB mailing list

VHPB news



- VHPB news
- Overview of the VHPB
- Meetings and publications
- Meeting Conclusions
- Links
- Contact address

[New!! *Viral Hepatitis*, Volume 16, Number 1, prepared from material presented at the VHPB - EUSUHM meeting on 'Prevention and control of viral hepatitis through adolescent health programmes in Europe' is online.](#) 631Kb (.pdf) **[Higher resolution version for printing](#)** 3Mb (.pdf)

This issue reviews the importance of reaching adolescents, provides an overview of currently existing youth health systems and reviews the experiences with childhood and adolescent immunization programmes of the industrialized countries represented.

[Meeting "Prevention and control of viral hepatitis in Greece: Lessons learnt and the way forward" is online.](#)

Aims of the meeting were:

- Overview of surveillance systems for infectious diseases;
- Update of the epidemiological situation on viral hepatitis;
- Evaluation of current prevention and control measures on viral hepatitis;
- Successes, problems and barriers to overcome measures on viral hepatitis;

The meeting programme, the pre-meeting document and most presentations of this meeting are available.

VHPB meeting
November/2007, Athens, Greece.

[Russian translations of *Viral Hepatitis* Issues are gathered on new page 'Russian Material'.](#)

VHPB e-mail service

Recieve a short message on VHPB web site updates

Document search

Retrieve documents



Meetings and Recommendations

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

REVIEW

Hepatitis A and B vaccination and public health

F. Blaine Hollinger,¹ B. Bell,² D. Levy-Bruhl,³ D. Shouval,⁴ S. Wiersma⁵ and P. Van Damme⁶

¹*Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX, USA;* ²*Division of Viral Hepatitis, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, GA, USA;* ³*Institut de Veille Sanitaire, Saint-Maurice, France;* ⁴*Hadassah University Hospital, Jerusalem, Israel;* ⁵*World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland;* and ⁶*Center for the Evaluation of Vaccination, University of Antwerp, Antwerp, Belgium*

Received July 2007; accepted for publication August 2007

SUMMARY. The introduction and implementation of hepatitis B vaccination programmes in areas of high endemicity has been very stressful. However, this initial accomplishment has led to the reassessment of priorities in some countries which could undermine these early successes. Work still remains to be done to support and implement interventions that will bring us closer to the WHO goal and to the control of hepatitis B in the community at large. Hepatitis A vaccine strategy for immunizing toddlers is shifting to those countries with intermediate endemicity where increasing morbidity in adults is being observed. Accumulating evidence

indicates that such programmes can result in impressive reductions in the incidence of hepatitis A by herd immunity. Monitoring of these populations to determine durability of protection will be important to avoid shifting the infection to the older age population, when symptoms are more likely to occur. National policies need to consider hepatitis A vaccination in the context of other public health priorities.

Keywords: epidemiology, hepatitis A vaccine, hepatitis B vaccine, vaccine prevention.

INTRODUCTION

titis B immunization for infants and preschool children, even in low endemicity countries.

European orientation towards
the Better Management of

Hepatitis B

in Europe

**Recommendations of the
Hepatitis B expert group**

chaired by Dr. T. Ulmer,
Member of the European Parliament



Country meetings

- Italy 2002
- Germany and the Nordic Countries 2003
- France 2004
- UK 2005
- Spain 2006
- Greece 2007

**Prevention and control of
viral hepatitis:
The role and impact of patient and
advocacy groups in and outside
Europe.**

**Viral Hepatitis Prevention Board
European Liver Patient Association Meeting
Lucca, Italy, March 13-14, 2008**

Objectives of the meeting

- Provide an overview of the activities, role, rationale and impact of patient and advocacy groups in Europe and the US in terms of prevention and control of viral hepatitis.
- Give examples of experiences of international and national patient and advocacy groups in Europe and the US.
- Identify challenges and thresholds experienced by liver patient groups regarding their role and impact on prevention and control of viral hepatitis.
- Discuss lessons learnt and opportunities.
- Discuss the role and impact of various partner agencies and organisations.