

Prevention and Control of Viral Hepatitis: Role and impact of liver patient groups in Europe



Hepatitis Foundation International
United States of America

HEPATITIS FOUNDATION
INTERNATIONAL

History of HFI

- Founded November 1994, Cedar Grove NJ
- Conceived as an organization that would serve as the leader in promoting liver wellness as the key to primary prevention of viral hepatitis

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Objectives and Role of HFI



- Educate the public, patients, and professionals about prevention, diagnosis and treatment of viral hepatitis
- Prevent viral hepatitis and promote healthy lifestyles
- Serve as advocates for patients and the medical community worldwide
- Support research into prevention, treatment and cures for viral hepatitis

Organization of Our Staff

- 14 members of the Board of Directors
- 15 members of the Medical Advisory Board
- Paid staff is composed of the following:
 - Chair and C.E.O.
 - C.O.O.
 - Executive Director
 - Office Manager
 - 2 Administrative Assistants
 - Webmaster (part time)

Target Audience



- Pre-kindergarten - K-12
- Teachers
- College/University Faculty and Students
- Patients
- Healthcare Professionals
- Counselors and Social Workers
- Juvenile Justice Workers
- Justice Department Personnel
- General Public

How We Reach Our Audience

- Free quarterly newsletter, *Hepatitis Alert*, readership of 10,000 individuals
- Website: hepatitisfoundation.org registers thousands of hits each day
- Toll-free information and referral hotline

Services and Activities: Prevention

- Foundation for Decision Making™ training for educators and healthcare workers
- Brochures, information sheets, and posters for sale to the public and healthcare agencies
- 14 DVDs that promote liver wellness and prevention of blood-borne pathogens and substance abuse. These are used by:
 - Schools
 - Clinics
 - Health Departments
 - Prisons
 - Support Groups

Support and Financing

- Private Donors – more than two thirds of HFI's funding comes from individuals gifts, memorials, and other direct public support
- Foundations and Governments Grants – occasionally support specific projects
- Pharmaceutical Partners – funding for educational programs
- Other – sale of DVDs, curricula, and print materials

Related Groups Active in the U.S.

- There are over 400 support groups across the country
- HFI refers patients to these groups via our toll-free information hotline
- HFI provides literature, DVDs, and newsletters to these groups

Strengths



- We provide the missing element in primary prevention by focusing on liver wellness
- Our FDM™ training uses humor and real-life examples so people can relate to and remember our messages
- We have quick and easy tools that make adding our curricula easy for educators, healthcare professionals and community leaders

Challenges

- Identifying new sources of funding for expanded awareness campaigns and other projects, including:
 - Providing all teachers with effective skills and age-appropriate materials for promoting primary prevention and liver health education in all schools
- Gaining support from elected officials for new legislation that strengthens education, emphasizes prevention, and supports healthy lifestyles

Conclusions

- Primary prevention and liver wellness information are essential to gain commitment from patients to avoid liver-damaging activities and to adopt healthier lifestyle behaviors
- Encourage those who have participated in unhealthy behaviors in the past to seek testing and treatment