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

Hepatitis Foundation International
United States of America
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
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

HEPATITIS FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL
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