



news release

IFPMA supports World Hepatitis Day 2014

- *IFPMA calls for action for collaborative approach to raise awareness on Hepatitis.*
- *Hepatitis is the world's 8th biggest killer. The yearly death toll is equivalent to the number of people living in cities like Philadelphia or Barcelona.*
- *A comprehensive care model is needed, including research, prevention, screening, and care.*

On the occasion of World Hepatitis Day, the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA) calls for collaboration to increase awareness on and understanding of a disease which silently kills still many.

Hepatitis is the 8th bigger killer disease, killing 1.6 million people per year. As of today, one in every 12 people worldwide are chronically infected with viral hepatitis.

The research-based biopharmaceutical industry has achieved major advances in treatment for Hepatitis B, transforming this disease into a treatable condition and strengthening prevention through increased access to vaccination. Most recently, newer drugs for Hepatitis C have increased cure rates for patients with HCV from 50% to over 90% in addition to reducing treatment durations and side effects.

The World Health Assembly approved last May a resolution on Hepatitis asking for the development and implementation of national strategies, enhanced actions related to prevention, a stronger involvement of the civil society and adequate surveillance system to support the development of evidence based policy. The resolution also calls upon all relevant United Nations funds and specialized agencies to include viral hepatitis in their programmes. Finally, the resolution mandated WHO to provide technical support to Member States, develop specific guidelines and a system for regular monitoring.

IFPMA welcomes the text and stands ready to collaborate with countries, public and private stakeholders to facilitate its implementation. "There is still lot of work ahead of us" – Mario Ottiglio, Director of Public Affairs and Global Health Policy at IFPMA. "We learned from our experience through partnerships that addressing hepatitis requires efforts at multiple levels" – Mario Ottiglio added.

Challenges for access to hepatitis care include: the lack of global funding, stigma associated to the disease, insufficient awareness and limited understanding of the disease by physicians and patients, and lack of comprehensive models of care that provide linkages between screening and care.

About IFPMA:

IFPMA represents the research-based pharmaceutical companies and associations across the globe. The research-based pharmaceutical industry's 1.3 million employees research, develop and provide medicines and vaccines that improve the life of patients worldwide. Based in Geneva, IFPMA has official relations with the United Nations and contributes industry expertise to help the global health community find solutions that improve global health.

For further information, please contact:

Morgane De Pol, Communications

Tel: +41 22 338 32 00 – E-mail : m.depol@ifpma.org