

(<http://www.hepbcppa.org>)

---

MENU

## EU HCV Policy Summit Press Release

---

**\*\*\*EMBARGOED UNTIL WEDNESDAY 17 FEBRUARY 2016, 12.00 PM CET\*\*\***

### **Hepatitis C-free Europe is possible by 2030**

BRUSSELS, 17 February 2016 – Europe’s leading experts, medical specialists and patient advocacy groups on hepatitis announced their intention to work towards the elimination of Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) in Europe by 2030.

The ‘Hepatitis C Elimination Manifesto’ was presented at the first EU HCV Policy Summit, organised by the Hepatitis B and C Public Policy Association, and supported by the main European patient and clinician groups.

Signatories of the ‘Hepatitis C Elimination Manifesto’ pledge to:

- Make hepatitis C and its elimination in Europe an explicit public health priority to be pursued at all levels
- Ensure that patients, civil society groups and other relevant stakeholders are directly involved in developing and implementing hepatitis C elimination strategies
- Pay particular attention to the links between hepatitis C and social marginalisation
- Introduce a European Hepatitis Awareness Week

Vytienis Andriukaitis, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, delivered a keynote speech at the event, commenting: “Hepatitis C has in the past been referred to as a “silent” epidemic within the European Union. It is high time that we brought this “silent” epidemic out of the shadows and into the light, so I welcome initiatives such as this Summit and the Elimination Manifesto to create momentum for action, for raising awareness and for stimulating discussion”.

After twenty five years of research, scientists have delivered the means to effectively cure hepatitis C, paving the way for elimination in Europe within the next decade. “What would have taken a hundred years for us to achieve, is now at hand! This is a unique opportunity, but political action is needed to make this happen”, stated Prof Angelos Hatzakis, Co-Chair of the Hepatitis B and C Public Policy Association. “Our ‘Elimination Manifesto’ is a rallying platform for policymakers and advocates. If we act now, Europe will be hepatitis C free by 2030”, continued Prof Hatzakis.

The specific challenges of hepatitis C require holistic, people-centred, health system-wide approaches to disease awareness, prevention and integrated care, with all stakeholders combining their diverse skills and resources in a unified response.

“Succeeding against hepatitis C in Europe is even more important given the current international crises and refugee flows towards our countries”, explained Cristian-Silviu Buşoi, Member of the European Parliament and Co-chair of the Parliament’s Friends of the Liver group. Buşoi continued: “Elimination strategies need to take into consideration the links between hepatitis C and marginalised groups, such as recent migrants, people who inject drugs and others.”

“The Manifesto sets out our vision and commitment to eliminate hepatitis C in Europe”, declared Prof Michael P. Manns, Co-Chair of the Hepatitis B and C Public Policy Association, “concrete actions at all levels must follow to achieve our goal”. The Manifesto will be presented to national and local governments as well as to the European institutions to encourage action.