



HEPATITIS C

MILLIONS STILL WAITING FOR A CURE

Hepatitis C (HCV) is a blood-borne virus that can lead to chronic liver disease, cirrhosis, cancer, and, if not treated, death. Symptoms can take decades to develop and most people living with the disease do not know they are infected. As a result, HCV is a silent epidemic. Recent years have seen a revolution in treatment innovation for HCV; however, barely 7% of people living with the disease worldwide have benefited, largely because drugs are priced out of reach.

HEPATITIS C STATISTICS



71 MILLION
people are living with HCV globally



ONLY **7%**
have had access to treatment



>1,000
people die from HCV every day

TREATMENT CHALLENGE

With the goal of eliminating HCV globally by 2030, WHO's Global Strategy on Viral Hepatitis aims for 90% of people with HCV to be diagnosed, and 80% of those eligible to be treated by the end of the decade. With cure rates of 90% and above, direct-acting antiviral treatments have opened up the possibility of rolling back the disease; if people are diagnosed and treated early enough to avoid infecting others, elimination is possible. But as of today, treatment remains largely unaffordable, so national HCV programmes to scale up diagnosis and treatment have stalled.

DNDi aims to develop an affordable, safe, effective, and easy-to-use direct-acting antiviral regimen that can help pave the way for a public health approach to HCV, and to support the innovative programmes needed to accelerate access to HCV diagnosis and treatment.

“ Linking patients with hepatitis C to early treatment is essential for Malaysia to achieve the WHO’s elimination target by 2030. ”

Dr Rosaida binti Mohd Said, Senior Consultant Gastroenterologist and Hepatologist, Serdang Hospital, Malaysia.



Two nurses from the hospital prepare members of the public for HCV screening as part of the #MYmissingmillions campaign.

An affordable new regimen

DNDi is developing ravidasvir (RDV) as part of a simple and affordable HCV treatment combination. Following licencing and manufacturing agreements with pharmaceutical partners Presidio and Pharco in 2016, DNDi conducted the Phase II/III STORM-C1 trial to evaluate RDV in combination with sofosbuvir (SOF) in Malaysia and Thailand. Financed by Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and co-sponsored by the Malaysian Ministry of Health and Thai government, the first stage of the trial showed the RDV+SOF combination to be comparable to the very best HCV therapies available today.

Together with our pharmaceutical partner Pharmaniaga, DNDi will pursue registration of RDV in Malaysia in mid-2020, and later in other middle-income countries. The second stage of the trial is now underway to confirm the RDV+SOF combination’s efficacy and safety.

“ **With the necessary will and commitment, we know hepatitis C can be eliminated. Our local and global partnerships, notably with DNDi, are ensuring we have the medical tools and strategies in place to succeed.** ”

Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah
Director General, Malaysia Ministry of Health

The promise of ‘test and treat’

Most of the 2.5% of Malaysians living with HCV do not know they have the disease. DNDi and partner FIND are working with the Malaysian Ministry of Health on a new initiative in the country demonstrating the feasibility of ‘test and treat’ strategies using rapid diagnostic tests to screen people for HCV in primary healthcare facilities and link new patients to treatment. With financial support from Unitaid, the project screened more than 11,000 patients in 2019 and initiated over 400 people on treatment.

“ **Ravidasvir holds tremendous promise for our medical teams, who need a simple, robust, and affordable hepatitis C treatment option to ensure vulnerable patients in developing countries have better access to a cure.** ”

Pierre Mendiharat
Deputy Operations Director,
Médecins Sans Frontières