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HCVAction

Bringing you the latest hepatitis C news and events

July 2023

Campaigners highlight hepatitis C for World Hepatitis Day 2023



Friday July 28th saw [World Hepatitis Day 2023](#), bringing campaigners around the world together under a single theme to raise awareness of the global burden of viral hepatitis and to influence real change. In 2023 the international theme from the [World Hepatitis Alliance](#) has been 'We're not waiting'.

In the UK, [The Hepatitis C Trust](#) came together with various partners to highlight the impact of hepatitis C in our communities, aiming to raise awareness about the hurdles people affected by hepatitis C face. This year The Hepatitis C Trust also campaigned [on a message of 'Don't miss the target'](#), highlighting the targets set by UK Governments to eliminate hepatitis C across the UK (with Scotland aiming for 2024/25, England and Northern Ireland for 2025 and Wales for 2030), and calling for planning to ensure that elimination is achieved by these target dates and maintained thereafter.

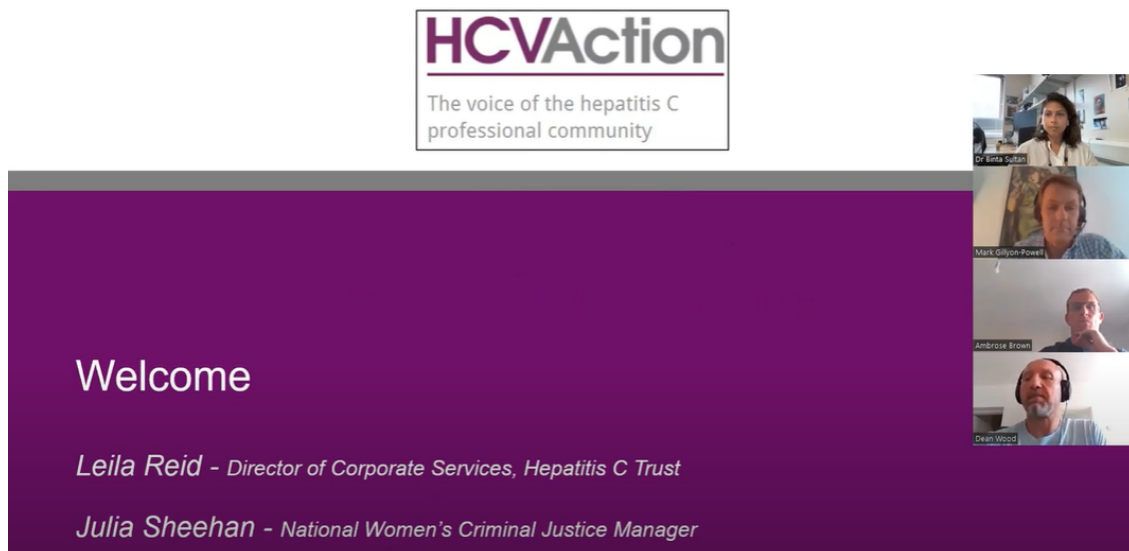
Staff and volunteers from The Hepatitis C Trust held events across the country to raise awareness of hepatitis C, support people to get tested and raise money to support the charity's peer support programme. Various [senior politicians](#)

[made statements of support](#) for the day, including [Health Minister Will Quince](#) and [Welsh First Minister Mark Drakeford](#), and [Scottish Public Health Minister Jenni Minto](#) recorded a video message of support.

On the day, the [UK Health Security Agency](#) released a statement noting that [hepatitis C prevalence has fallen by 45% in England](#) since 2015, with 70,649 people living with hepatitis C in England in 2022. This was down from a previous estimate of 74,600 in 2021. It was also announced that [NHS England](#) has treated more than 80,000 people since 2015 as part of its national elimination programme, meaning more people have now been treated and cured of the virus than are left to treat.

[Public Health Wales](#) released a [report](#) providing an overview of the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of blood-borne viruses in Wales, including hepatitis C. The report shows progress in increasing hepatitis C testing rates following the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, but notes the need to improve provision of needle and syringes to aid prevention.

HCV Action webinar on engaging socially excluded groups available to watch back



HCV Action
The voice of the hepatitis C professional community

Welcome

Leila Reid - Director of Corporate Services, Hepatitis C Trust

Julia Sheehan - National Women's Criminal Justice Manager

Dr Binta Sultan
Mark Gillyon-Powell
Ambrose Brown
Dean Wood

On July 13th HCV Action held a webinar on lessons from the hepatitis C elimination programme for engaging socially excluded ('inclusion health') groups in healthcare.

Talks at the event included Dr Binta Sultan (Consultant Physician in [Inclusion Health, University College London Hospital](#)) giving an overview of inclusion health as an area of healthcare; Mark Gillyon-Powell (Head of Programme - HCV Elimination, [NHS England](#)) who outlined what inclusion health initiatives

could take from England's hepatitis C elimination programme; Dr Ryan Buchanan (Associate Professor of Hepatology, [University of Southampton](#)) on how the hepatitis C peer model could be applied to other liver health areas; and Dean Wood and Ambrose Brown (Yorkshire peer team members for The Hepatitis C Trust) outlining the experience of delivering hepatitis C healthcare in prison settings. The event was co-chaired by Leila Reed and Julia Sheehan from The Hepatitis C Trust.

The [slides from the webinar can be viewed here](#), and a full recording can be [watched on the HCV Action YouTube channel](#). Additionally, see our [Twitter thread](#) for a summary of the event.

Developments to improve case-finding and care in primary care



Driving Elimination through
HCV Case Finding in
Primary Care

April 2023 | GB-NOM-67383
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Hepatitis C: Enhancing Prevention, Testing and Care

Start Hepatitis C: enhancing prevention, testing and care

This course provides an understanding of hepatitis C and its prevalence. It also gives an overview of the liver and its function, and the stages and natural history of untreated hepatitis C liver disease.

Supported by the UK Health Security Agency, an executive agency sponsored by the Department of Health and Social Care



The [UK Health Security Agency](#) has published an updated version of its e-learning resource with the [Royal College of GPs \(RCGP\)](#), 'Hepatitis C: Enhancing Prevention, Testing and Care eLearning course'. This course provides an understanding of hepatitis C and its prevalence. It also gives an overview of the liver and its function, the stages and natural history of untreated hepatitis C liver disease, and the effect that the hepatitis C virus can have on the liver if it is left untreated. The chapters available include: Understanding Hepatitis C; Preventing Hepatitis C Transmission; Testing and Diagnosis; and Hepatitis C Treatment and Care.

The resource is available for free [here](#), though you must first [create a free account](#) with the RCGP if you do not have one. The course takes two hours to complete, including a pre- and post-course assessment.

Separately, [a new report](#) by [MSD](#) has explored how hepatitis C case-finding in primary care could be improved and how to increase the uptake and use of the Patient Search Identification (PSI) software, drawing on a roundtable bringing together leading voices in hepatitis C care. The report identifies current

challenges in the pathway and recommendations to assist with increased case-finding, and puts forward eight recommendations for effective implementation.

News and reports

* This year's HCV Action ODN Stakeholder Event, taking place at Warwick University in Coventry on September 12th, is now [open for registration](#) (either in-person or to watch via livestream – places are limited for the former and please ensure the right ticket for how you plan to join). The event is the annual gathering of the hepatitis C professional community to discuss progress towards elimination, showcase best practice and successful projects, and identify solutions to common challenges in reaching elimination.

* [Drink and Drug News featured an article](#) from HCV Action and The Hepatitis C Trust's Elliot Bidgood, outlining the success of the hepatitis C elimination programme so far and the need to maintain momentum.

* Telford & Wrekin Council and [NHS Inclusion \(part of Midlands Partnership University NHS Foundation\)](#) have announced that the local drug service [Telford STaRS](#) has [achieved micro-elimination for hepatitis C within their service](#).

* [Hep C U Later](#) have featured an [article](#) by Zoe Yates, a Peer Programme Manager with The Hepatitis C Trust, on the role of peers in engaging with people and encouraging them to have a test and/or treatment.

* Direct-Acting Antiviral (DAA) medication for the hepatitis C virus [may strengthen survival against hepatocellular carcinoma \(HCC\) among patients](#), according to researchers in Taiwan.

* [New research from the University of Copenhagen](#) has cast light on how the hepatitis C virus avoids the human body's immune defences.

Share good practice

If you would like your service to be featured as a good practice case study on the HCV Action website, have any news to share with colleagues, or would be interested in being an [HCV Action Ambassador](#), please send an email to hcvaction@hepctrust.org.uk.



*HCV Action is co-funded by AbbVie, Gilead, and MSD.
The Hepatitis C Trust provides secretariat support to HCV Action.*

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