



PRESS RELEASE

AbbVie is committed to the elimination of hepatitis C in Canada by 2030

- Everyone has a part to play in making hepatitis C (HCV) elimination the next public health success story.
- Partnerships are essential to solving some of the most pressing challenges.

MONTREAL (Quebec), July 25, 2019 – AbbVie (NYSE: ABBV), a global, research and development-based biopharmaceutical company, supports a wide range of efforts to help elevate and prioritize hepatitis C (HCV) elimination because achieving the shared goal of elimination by 2030 will take more than medicine. It will take transparent and collaborative partnerships with healthcare professionals, governments and community organizations to remove barriers to care and to help simplify treatment options, especially for the Priority populations, which include people who inject or use drugs, as well as immigrants and newcomers to Canada.¹

“HCV elimination starts with demonstrating our commitment to the World Health Organization 2030 goal,” explains Stéphane Lassignardie, General Manager, AbbVie Canada. “Through partnerships with stakeholders, we are working to find sustainable solutions that allow more patients to be screened, linked to care, and treated in a shorter period of time. We have engaged with governments across Canada to lower the price of hepatitis C treatments so that every patient cured accelerates the path to elimination. This is because we have a shared commitment and by working together, we can eliminate this disease.”

In Canada, an estimated 250,000 people are living with chronic hepatitis C but as many as 44% are not aware that they have it.¹ Left undiagnosed and untreated, chronic hepatitis C can lead to cirrhosis, liver cancer or liver failure. Currently, hepatitis C is the leading indication for liver transplant in Canada.² Of the people who inject drugs, 66% have past or current HCV infection.¹

Cool Aid Community Health Centre based in Victoria, British Columbia, provides integrated primary health care services within a multidisciplinary team to treat illness and promote wellness. “Because HCV disproportionately affects marginalized populations in Canada, our nurse-led model for the treatment of HCV focuses on community outreach and intensive case management in order to successfully treat those living with HCV who require a high level of support. In addition, we work with the HCV treatment providers to develop education and awareness tools specific to this population,” says Tamara Barnett, Primary Care Nurse Clinician at Cool Aid Community Health Centre.

Up to 35% of all HCV infections in Canada are among immigrants and newcomers, especially those from countries where HCV is common.¹ Although voluntary HCV screening after arrival in Canada is included in existing national recommendations, immigrants and newcomers are less likely to access the healthcare system than Canadian-born residents, and healthcare providers may be unaware of countries where HCV is common.¹

“At the Jewish General Hospital, we see thousands of people on a yearly basis with a variety of liver diseases. A significant number of them are immigrants and newcomers. Hepatitis C is one of the common diseases that we find among this population. I must say that we have a great referral system with our local community health centres,” explains Dr. Nir Hilzenrat, Gastroenterologist and Hepatologist. “Today, we have the right treatments to eliminate hepatitis C, but if we are to reach the goal set by the World Health Organization, we need to work on prevention, as well as screening and linking to care people living with this disease. For me, it’s important to work with the Priority populations to educate them in order to remove any barriers and facilitate understanding so that they can be successfully treated and cured.”

Sunday, July 28, marks World Hepatitis Day. Ahead of this date, AbbVie held an HCV Awareness and Screening Day for its employees providing an opportunity to learn more about the disease and to get tested on a voluntary basis. On July 18, close to 30% of head office employees participated seeking to get answers to better understand the myths, facts and stigma surrounding this devastating and deadly disease.

About AbbVie

AbbVie is a global, research and development-based biopharmaceutical company committed to developing innovative advanced therapies for some of the world’s most complex and critical conditions. The company’s mission is to use its expertise, dedicated people and unique approach to innovation to markedly improve treatments across four primary therapeutic areas: immunology, oncology, virology and neuroscience. In more than 75 countries, AbbVie employees are working every day to advance health solutions for people around the world. For more information about AbbVie, please visit us at www.abbvie.ca and www.abbvie.com. Follow [@abbvieCanada](https://twitter.com/abbvieCanada) and [@abbvie](https://twitter.com/abbvie) on Twitter or view careers on our [Facebook](#) or [LinkedIn](#) page.

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¹ Canadian Network on Hepatitis C (CanHepC). Blueprint to inform hepatitis C elimination efforts in Canada. www.canhepc.ca/sites/default/files/media/documents/blueprint_hcv_2019_05.pdf. Accessed July 2019.

² The Canadian Liver Foundation. www.liver.ca/how-you-help/advocate/. Accessed July 2019.