



## PRESS RELEASE

### We can eliminate Hepatitis C in Canada by 2030

- 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.<sup>1</sup>
- Partnerships are essential in solving some of the most pressing public health challenges.

**Montreal, QC, JULY 28, 2020** - AbbVie (NYSE: ABBV), a global, research and development-based biopharmaceutical company, firmly supports efforts to eliminate hepatitis C. In Canada, an estimated 250,000 people are living with hepatitis C but almost half (44%) of Canadians infected are unaware they are living with the disease.<sup>1</sup>

We are 10 years away from the [World Health Organization's \(WHO\)](#) mandate of curing the world of hepatitis C. In 2016, Canada was one of the 194 countries that committed to eliminating the disease by 2030.

AbbVie supports a wide range of efforts to help elevate and prioritize hepatitis C 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.

“To reach the WHO 2030 goal of hepatitis C elimination, we must see this objective as a national and provincial health priority year after year. As the challenge is to identify people who are unaware they have Hepatitis C, and therefore need care, building meaningful elimination initiatives will help us to reach the goal of disease elimination,” Denis Hello, Vice-President and General Manager AbbVie Canada.

In Canada, the most at-risk populations for hepatitis C include Indigenous people, people with experience in the prison system, people born between 1945 and 1975, immigrants and newcomers, and people who inject or use drugs<sup>1</sup>. Up to 35% of all hepatitis C infections in Canada are among immigrants and newcomers from countries where hepatitis C is common<sup>1</sup>. People who inject drugs account for up to 66% of past or current HCV infections<sup>1</sup>. Through partnerships with organizations such as HepCURE in Toronto and the Jewish General Hospital in Montreal, AbbVie continues to work towards the goal of disease elimination.

HepCURE has developed a comprehensive clinical treatment program that specifically addresses the unmet needs of marginalized individuals and people who inject drugs. Along with creating awareness and educating the community, the program fast-tracks access to diagnosis and treatment by eliminating linkage to care barriers and leveraging technology to track and monitor treatment related interventions and outcomes.

“We invest a lot of time understanding the needs of the patient population to develop solutions that truly address treatment related barriers and medication adherence issues. We also work very closely with community-based providers to support patients during treatment which leads to better care and help them achieve their treatment goals,” explains Christian Marcoux, Executive Director, HepCURE.

Through their outreach work and a goal of micro elimination in the immigrant community, the Hepatitis C Project at the Jewish General Hospital identifies patients who may have been lost to follow up due to cultural or language barriers; and links them to testing, care, and initiates treatment as required.

“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.

Building meaningful elimination initiatives with stakeholders such as these, we are working to find sustainable solutions that allow more patients to be screened, linked to care, and treated sooner. Let’s work together to ensure that Canada is one of the countries that is on track to reach our shared WHO 2030 elimination objective.

#### **About AbbVie**

AbbVie’s mission is to discover and deliver innovative medicines that solve serious health issues today and address the medical challenges of tomorrow. We strive to have a remarkable impact on people’s lives across several key therapeutic areas: immunology, oncology, neuroscience, eye care, virology, women’s health and gastroenterology, in addition to products and services across its Allergan Aesthetics portfolio. For more information about AbbVie, please visit us at [www.abbvie.ca](http://www.abbvie.ca) and [www.abbvie.com](http://www.abbvie.com). Follow [@abbvieCanada](https://twitter.com/abbvieCanada) and [@abbvie](https://twitter.com/abbvie) on Twitter or view careers on our [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/abbvie) or [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/abbvie) page.

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<sup>1</sup> Canadian Network on Hepatitis C (CanHepC). Blueprint to inform hepatitis C elimination efforts in Canada. [https://www.canhepc.ca/sites/default/files/media/documents/blueprint\\_hcv\\_2019\\_05.pdf](https://www.canhepc.ca/sites/default/files/media/documents/blueprint_hcv_2019_05.pdf) accessed July 2019.