World Health Assembly Passes New Hepatitis Resolution

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Four years after introducing its first viral hepatitis resolution, the World Health Assembly, the decision-making body of the World Health Organization (WHO), has passed a new position paper challenging the WHO and all U.N. member states to take urgent action to address the global hepatitis pandemic.

The new resolution comes at a critical moment for the fight against the hepatitis C virus (HCV), for which new, highly effective treatments have begun to hit the international market. The World Health Assembly officially supports the production and import of generic versions of new hep C drugs for low- and middle-income countries and is pushing these nations to facilitate universal access to treatment for the disease.

The position paper has also experienced some backlash for advocating the inclusion of harm-reduction programs such as syringe exchanges and opioid substitution therapy on an international scale to address at-risk populations, particularly injection drug users. Globally, it is estimated that 185 million people are living with hepatitis C. Since 2010, more than a million have died from HCV-related liver disease.

Click here to read the entire Hepatitis Resolution, titled: *Defuse Hepatitis C, the Viral Time Bomb: Test and Treat Hepatitis C: Position Paper for the 67th World Health Assembly, May 19–24, 2014.*

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