Hungary

June 14, 2016 By Greg Jefferys

Because I am talking with people with Hep C from all over the world every day I get a strange patchwork of a global perspective on the Hepatitis C situation. I say a patchwork perspective because whilst I talk with a lot of people about generic Hep C treatment options and related issues, I get a lot of enquiries from some countries and few or no enquiries from others.
This is an interesting thing and it has taken some time to understand why this is so. It is easy enough to understand for some countries, like for example Holland or Denmark it is because they have very good public health care systems and people with Hep C there will get their treatment for free without having to wait years until they have cirrhosis and permanent liver damage.
But there are other countries that I rarely hear from and this is because their authoritarian governments have such tight controls over the importation of generic medicines that people with Hep C there know they have very little chance of successfully importing medication for self treatment so they just don't bother considering it.

Another factor in these same countries is that they also have highly authoritarian and controlling medical professionals. A medical 'establishment' where the doctors consider themselves the absolute authority on issues of health and treatment, where they resent and resist any outside voice or alternative opinion to that which they themselves are suggesting or offering. A common feature is also that these same medical 'authorities' walk hand in hand with Big Pharma and enjoy a share of the largess that Big Pharma dispenses amongst its followers.
These are countries like Hungary, Serbia, Austria, Germany and other Fascist states of Eastern Europe. These are nations where state control and medical authoritarianism over-ride their citizens' right to good health, to making their own choices about their treatment options.
In these countries doctors are like the priests of the Dark Ages in the way they resent any alternative to what the status quo offers and will burn at the stake anyone who seeks or offers alternatives.

An example of this is a conversation I have been having with a person from the USA over the last couple of months. She has been helping a poor family friend, who lives in Hungary, try to get treatment for their Hep C.
After doing her research she suggested that her friend use the generic treatment option and contacted me for details and options.
However in the mean time her friend in Hungary had been speaking to his doctors and they had convinced him that generics were a total waste of time, that they were either fake or dangerous and then further convinced this man that his only hope was to purchase the Harvoni treatment for US$85,000.
Now this is a poor man living in a poor country on a very low income.
His only asset is his house which he was able to montage for US$35,000 but was still well short of what he needed for the treatment so he has asked his friend in the USA to help him with money.
This is the most recent email:

Hi Greg,
I just talked to #### again and he is still hoping that I will be able to send him $5,000 so he can start the medicine. I can only cry now when I talk to him because I have no money to send him and I also know that this would only give him one month of pills!! I tell him about you and how you can get generics. However, his doctors have convinced him that this generic medicine is no good. Even after many times I have told him that it is exactly the SAME as what he a paying a fortune for.

I begged him to have his brother #### email you at least to just ask questions. His brother can translate his Hungarian to English before he sends to you and I also told him he could CC to me so I can help with any understanding. I am praying that #####'s younger brother , will email you to ask questions. I believe if you can ease their mind about this way..... so that ##### may have a chance to live.

These are some questions he needs to know:

How do you know this medicine is the same??
How long would it take to get the medicine??
Where does he have to go to get the medicine??
Will he be able to get a doctor who can monitor his progress??

many thanks for your help
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It is a sad situation where one of the most profitable businesses in the world (pharmaceuticals) uses its money to buy the favours of one of the wealthiest professions in the world (medicine) to the detriment of the world's sick and suffering people.

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