NVHR Statement Recognizing World Hepatitis Day

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The National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable (NVHR), a national coalition working to eliminate viral hepatitis, today released the following joint statement from Director of Programs Adrienne Simmons and Director of Policy Daniel Raymond recognizing World Hepatitis Day:

“World Hepatitis Day is an important opportunity to raise awareness around and act on the needs of the viral hepatitis community. NVHR calls on policymakers at all levels of government and leadership to address the needs of the viral hepatitis community adequately and meaningfully, to achieve an equitable world free of viral hepatitis.

“Over 5 million Americans today are living with chronic hepatitis B and/or hepatitis C. While highly effective tools to prevent, test for, and treat viral hepatitis exist, the United States is losing ground on the fight against viral hepatitis overall. The time is now to properly fund programs that will bring us closer to meeting the World Health Organization’s (WHO) ambitious goal of eliminating viral hepatitis by 2030.

“We have been encouraged by new guidelines and recommendations over the past year from leaders at the federal level, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommending universal hepatitis B vaccination for adults ages 19-59; the Biden administration producing a strong national drug control strategy that promotes proven harm reduction strategies to stem the tide in overdose deaths and related infectious disease transmission; and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) reclassifying certain hepatitis C tests to simplify the pathway to agency approval. The most recent spending bill proposal from the House of Representatives Appropriations Committee would increase funding for the CDC Division of Viral Hepatitis by $13,500,000, a substantial increase for critical programs to eliminate viral hepatitis as a public health threat. Additionally, 14 state Medicaid programs have simplified the pathway to hepatitis C treatment by eliminating prior authorization for most patients entirely.

“We recognize that there is significant work that remains to be done in the fight against viral hepatitis. NVHR remains committed to using the power of effective advocacy to secure the necessary funding for programs that directly address the viral hepatitis epidemic, including those that deal with the opioid use epidemic, as well as programs that prioritize equity in health outcomes across racial, gender, and socioeconomic lines.”

For more information about viral hepatitis and the need for a stronger public health response to rising hepatitis rates, please visit www.nvhr.org.

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