Poverty As a Barrier to Hepatitis C Treatment

January 10, 2019 By Greg Jefferys

Every day I get emails that are more or less like the ones below, which I received this morning:

Hi Greg

My name is Francisco. I am very sick and I don't have a lot of money. I live in Mexico and I have Hep C and I need to do the treatment and you please email me and see what I need to do.

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Hallo Greg

We need to purchase affordable meds for my fiancé.
He has no insurance and can't get any. Can you help? He spoke with you a few days ago via email about what happened and what he needs to do. But he's very nervous. We both are sceptical. And we need advice please and thank you!!!

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These two emails resonated deeply with me because, in the most simple way, they described the position of tens of millions of people around the world who are infected with Hepatitis C and can not afford to buy the treatment.

I completely understand the way that Francisco and others feel, knowing that they dying from a disease that could be easily cured except for the fact that the cost of the medication is outrageously high.

I understand this because in 2014, when I first learned that I had Hepatitis C there were no generic treatment options and there was no way that I could afford the $100,000 that Gilead was asking for the treatment that I needed.

Then in 2015, when generic Sovaldi became available, I was only able to get it because friends and family lent me the money to make the trip to India and buy the medication. Through all of that process, at every turn, I was helped by complete strangers; people who I did not know helped me to make all the necessary connections to find the right people in India and then to buy the correct medication.

For this reason, I have dedicated my life since then to helping people from every walk of life and from every nation on Earth to access affordable Hepatitis C treatment.

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