Things get Serious in Serbia

March 6, 2017 By Greg Jefferys

Over the last couple of days things have taken a serious turn for the worst in Serbia with Serbia Police raiding the homes of various people, arresting them and seizing computers, medicines and money. These people being raided are Serbian people who have been helping Serbians with Hepatitis C access generic treatment.

It is a terrible development that and Serbian people with Hep C will die as a result of the Serbian government forcefully blocking its citizens' access to treatment.

Background
I was first contacted by a person from Serbia with Hep C back in December 2015. This person had contracted Hep C from a blood transfusion in a Serbian hospital. The only treatment offered to him was Interferon with Ribavirin.
This man was, like most Serbs, on a monthly wage of about 300 euros. Less than $100 per week.
At this early stage I had never sent generics to Serbia so I tried but they were seized at the border by Serbian Customs.
To cut a long story short the only option was for this man to fly to India. Not having enough money himself his friends and family all contributed and he raised the air fare and enough money to buy generic sofosbuvir in India. I organised for him to connect with a supplier in Delhi.
Because he did not have enough money to even stay one night the supplier met him at the airport and he got his medicines and flew home.
He is now cured.

This process was repeated a couple of times until we worked out places that we could send medicines to outside of Serbia and Serbian people could then travel to these countries and get their medicines.
This was done with the help of volunteers who carried in the medicines for no charge while I arranged everything.
Over the next year this situation evolved and several suppliers from India and myself worked out ways of getting reasonable quantities of generic Hep C medicines into Serbia.
Between the various players dozens of Serbian people with Hep C were being treated and cured at no cost to the Serbian health system and without the horror side effects from the Interferon + Ribavirin being offered by the Serbian government.
This was all going along smoothly until this week when the Serbian police raided one of the people involved in providing access to generic Hepatitis C medicines in Serbia.
They arrest this person, seized his computer and phone, a couple of treatments of generic Harvoni

and some cash.
The next day they raided the home of another person from another network arrested that person and siezed computers and more than ten treatments of generic Harvoni.

Now all access to generic Hep C treatment has ceased in Serbia.

So now only Serbians who have enough money to fly to India and buy the medicines themselves have any hope of getting their Hep C cured.
The Serbian government only offers Interferon + Ribavirin treatment and even that is heavily triaged because the Serbian health service has no money.

So what have the Serbian police achieved by this?
They have cost the Serbian Health Service hundreds of thousands of Euros and condemned tens of thousands of Serbians with Hepatitis C to a long and lingering sickness, liver cancer and death.

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