



Viral Hepatitis Prevention Board (VHPB)

Introduction





VHPB



**More than 35 years active in the control and prevention of
viral hepatitis in Europe**

VIRAL HEPATITIS PREVENTION BOARD

The **Viral Hepatitis Prevention Board (VHPB)** is an international board of experts in viral hepatitis, continuously active since 1992. Board members meet twice a year to discuss technical and country specific issues, with a focus on Europe. These meetings provide a forum for experts to exchange ideas and to develop consensus guidelines on issues related to viral hepatitis prevention and control, all in line with WHO's viral hepatitis elimination goals and focusing on the public health impact. Focus audiences are, in first instance, opinion leaders, policymakers, and health care professionals.



VHPB mission

■ Mission statement

The objective of VHPB is to contribute to the **control** and **prevention** of **viral hepatitides**:

- by drawing the attention to this important public health problem
- by issuing prevention and control guidance and catalyse the development of recommendations,
- by encouraging actions to improve control, prevention and elimination.

All activities are in line with **viral hepatitis elimination goals** defined by **WHO** Global Health strategy

Focus audiences are, in first instance, opinion leaders, policymakers, public health and health care professionals

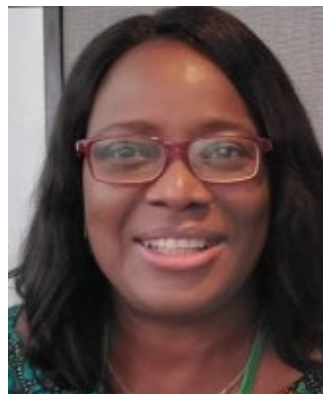


Way of Working

International Organisations



Ivana Dragojevic
ELPA



Funmi Lesi
WHO HQ



Marcelo Naveira
WHO Euro



Erika Duffell
ECDC



Rania Tohme
CDC



Shira Zelber-Sagi
EASL



John Ward
Task Force



Public Health



Sandra Dudareva
Germany



Sema Mandal
UK



Silvia Bino
Albania



Mira Kojouharova
Bulgaria



David Goldberg
Scotland

Academia



Thomas Berg
Germany



Stephane Chevaliez
France



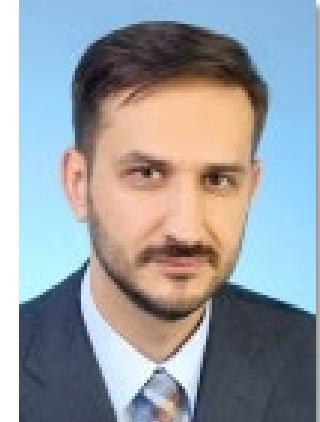
Sharon Hutchinson
Scotland



Paolo Bonanni
Italy



Rui Tato Marinho
Portugal



Vladimir Chulanov
Russia



Pierre Van Damme
Belgium
VHPB Executive Secretary



Thomas Vanwolleghem
Belgium



Vana Papaevangelou
Greece



Angela Dominguez
Spain



Mojca Maticic
Slovenia



Maria Buti
Spain

VHPB Honorary Advisors

- Prof. Dr. Selim Badur
- Dr. Hans Blystad
- Dr. Claire Cameron
- Prof. Dr. Pietro Crovari
- Dr. Nedret Emiroglu
- Prof. Dr. Alain Goudeau
- Prof. Dr. Peter Grob
- Dr. Nicole Guérin
- Priv.Doiz. Dr. Med. Habil. Johannes F. Hallauer †
- Prof. Dr. Med. Wolfgang Jilg
- Dr. Mark Kane
- Dr. Daniel Lavanchy
- Dr. Harold Margolis †
- Dr. Antons Mozalevskis
- Dr. Eric Mast
- Dr. Elisabeth McCloy
- Prof. Dr. André Meheus †
- Prof Helène Norder
- MSc. Tatjana Reic
- Prof. Dr. Lars Rombo
- Dr. Françoise Roudot-Thoraval
- Dr. Colette Roure
- Dr. Craig Shapiro
- Prof. Dr Daniel Shouval
- Dr. Steven Wiersma
- Dr. Alessandro Zanetti

These honorary members are elected for a lifelong term and are invited to VHPB meetings on an ad hoc basis.



VHPB secretariat



Executive secretary

- Pierre Van Damme

Personnel involved

- Greet Hendrickx
- Sara Valckx
- Brenda Janssens
- Xenia Mikulla
- Sakshi Jindal
- Jade Pattyn
- Ricardo Burdier
- Dur-e-Nayab Waheed
- Alex Vorsters



All secretariat members have additional tasks in the VAXINFECTIO department of the University of Antwerp

Located within the facilities of the Centre for the Evaluation of Vaccination (CEV), University of Antwerp

Funding

- VHPB is supported by *unrestricted grants* from the vaccine industry (GlaxoSmithKline Biologicals, Gilead, Merck, Sanofi) and several universities in Europe and other institutions
- VHPB is not a legal entity, all grants are collected by the **University of Antwerp**
- The VHPB does accept **unrestricted grants** from companies to support their activities including web development but maintains all editorial control over the content of the site. Editorial control of the site rests entirely with the secretariat of the VHPB
- All participants at the meetings as well as Board members are never payed for their activities and input in the VHPB. Only their participation costs are reimbursed in line with the rules of the University of Antwerp.

VHPB modus operandi



WAY OF WORKING

The VHPB provides evidence-based expertise to support the control and prevention of all types of viral hepatitis. Its mission includes:

- Highlighting the significance of viral hepatitis as a public health issue.
- Developing prevention strategies and facilitating the creation of recommendations.
- Promoting initiatives to enhance control and prevention efforts.

The VHPB organises at least two international meetings per year, offering a platform for dissemination and discussions. Meetings usually cover a specific topical issue in viral hepatitis prevention and control, or have the intention to discuss viral hepatitis management in a specific country or region. The meetings are set up to promote sharing, learning, inspiring and foster collaboration, with the ultimate goal to contribute to the fight against viral hepatitis.

Visit: <https://www.vhpb.org/meetings/>

Two meetings per year

1. Technical meeting

- Discuss, review and issue guidelines or recommendations for critical issues in viral hepatitis focusing on public health impact

2. Country meeting

- Understand strategies and programs to control viral hepatitis in the country
- Monitor progress of countries in control of viral hepatitis, verify the WHO elimination goals
- Create a platform where people of the country involved in viral hepatitis can discuss and can start future initiatives
- Initiate or accelerate the development of a National viral hepatitis plan
- Draft guidelines to support countries based on lessons learned from other countries

Meetings - Way of working



Meeting topics- countries
Objectives – meeting outcome

Literature –web review



Draft agenda

Potential speakers

Potential participants



VHPB TECHNICAL MEETING
 +++Online+++
The impact of COVID-19 on the
(1) prevention of viral hepatitis
(2) 2030 WHO elimination goals
18 & 25 March 2021 – 16h30 until 20h00
[Draft MEETING agenda](#)

- MEETING OBJECTIVES**
- The impact of COVID-19 on the prevention of viral hepatitis
- Evaluate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on National/regional vaccination and prevention programs for viral hepatitis
 - Discuss how increasing vaccine hesitancy due to the pandemic may endanger the high coverage rates of hepatitis B vaccination
 - Evaluate lessons/learns from existing catch up programmes
 - Discuss the scale up of the public health needs to improve prevention and immunization of viral hepatitis which were negatively influenced by the pandemic
- The impact of COVID-19 on the viral hepatitis elimination goals
- Evaluate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on viral hepatitis, screening, control & treatment in Europe
 - What is the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on the elimination goals, regionally and on country level
 - Review the possible implementation of control measures, new prevention strategies and monitoring systems during and after a pandemic, lessons learnt.
 - Assess the (extra) needs to achieve the goal of eliminating viral hepatitis as a major public health threat in Europe by 2030 as defined by WHO's Regional office for Europe. Discuss successes, issues and the new challenges

part: The impact of COVID-19 on the prevention and vaccination of viral hepatitis

Thursday 18 March 2021

Introduction of the participants

Chair: Greet Hendrickx

- 16:30-17:00**
- Welcome and opening of the meeting
 - Introduction of the participants

Session 1.1: COVID-19 impact on hepatitis prevention in risk groups

Chair: Marko Korenčič

17:00-17:40

How is the pandemic affecting harm reduction services working on HIV, hepatitis and STIs.

Pre-recorded

[Discussion in HIV, hepatitis and STI services due to Covid](#)

Nicole **Segez** (WHO)

EMCDDA

Impact of COVID-19 on harm reduction services

Live

Jane Mounterney (head of public health EMCDDA)

Correlation Network

How harm reduction must go on – focusing on hepatitis

Pre-recorded

Eberhard Schatz (C-EHRN)

This is a draft version of the VHPB meeting agenda, not all proposed speakers confirmed yet

Broad range of topics covered in 30 years

- Hepatitis B vaccination
 - Universal Immunisation programs
(transition from risk group strategy to universal immunization)
 - Adolescent and new-born programmes
 - Safety issues
 - long term efficacy Surveillance best practice
 - Vaccine shortage
 - Non-responders
 - Occult hepatitis
 - Long term (+25y) HBV vaccination and treatment (2022)
- Hepatitis B and C asymptomatic infection and chronic carriage
 - Surveillance activities
 - Identification and management
 - Treatment of hepatitis C a public health challenge
 - Impact of treatment non-responders on public health
 - Perinatal transmission
- Treatment as Prevention (2020)
 - Of HCV in risk groups
 - Of HBV to prevent MTCT & progression of liver disease
- Injection safety and safe blood supply
 - Realization that ~50% injections unsafe in developing world
- HBV mutants and variants
 - Prediction “Escape mutants” would negate gains of immunization.
- Prevention and control of hepatitis in migrants and refugees
 - Increasingly important issue
- How to reach risk groups
- Hepatitis A and E
 - Hepatitis A: one dose (2020)
- Hepatitis D (2021)
- Economical analysis
 - A viral hepatitis free future: how to make it affordable
- The impact of COVID-19 on the prevention and control of viral hepatitis (2021)



Countries covered

- Italy (2002)
- Germany and the Nordic Countries (2003)
- France (2004)
- UK (2005)
- Spain (2006)
- Greece (2007)
- The Netherlands (2008)
- Turkey (2009)
- Portugal (2010)
- Bulgaria (2011)
- Arctic Region (2012)
- Israel (2013)
- Brazil (2014)
- Baltic states (2015)
- Albania (2016)
- Belgium – Luxembourg (2017)
- The Russian Federation (2018)
- Hungary (2019)
- Balkan Meeting (2022)



Special meeting Romania 2018

The Role of VHPB in the Elimination debate

- Create awareness for viral hepatitis as a public health problem
- Bring together all stakeholders in a Country/Europe to share knowledge and enthusiasm for the elimination goals
- Together with other organisations in Europe fight for attention for the elimination of viral hepatitis in the region
- Looking and disseminate all evidence-based material to support the elimination debate
- Create a platform where academics, scientists, public health representative and health care providers can meet and share information
- Catalyse the creation of guidelines and recommendation for the prevention and control of viral hepatitis

Outreach

- Website – vhpb.org
- Report
 - Website
 - Scientific paper
- LinkedIn



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Viral Hepatitis Prevention Board



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Viral Hepatitis Prevention Board

VHPB technical meeting

**Viral hepatitis in Europe's Beating
Cancer Plan – Prevention and control of
viral hepatitis as cancer prevention
opportunities**

ANTWERP, BELGIUM

27-28 March 2025

PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Practical meeting info

- Please keep the time that is foreseen in the agenda
- This is an **interactive meeting**, but make sure that when you have a question or comment, switch on your mic but don't forget to switch off after your intervention.
- Online Participants
 - Please switch on your video while introducing yourself and every time you speak
 - Keep yourself on mute when not speaking
 - Please make use of the chat function to ask any burning questions/ or raise your (virtual) hand



Meeting Objectives

- Discuss viral hepatitis in the **EU Beating Cancer Plan** and the latest **EU Council recommendations**, all in relation with WHO's viral hepatitis elimination goals for 2030
- Discuss how viral hepatitis focused health initiatives can **reduce liver cancer** and thereby identify opportunities to integrate viral hepatitis management as cancer prevention strategy at the level of **screening, vaccination, prevention and treatment**
- Identify effective strategies to **enhance health equity** in viral hepatitis and liver cancer prevention, particularly for **vulnerable and high-risk populations**
- Explore methods for improving **viral hepatitis and cancer registry data collection**, integration, and reporting to **enhance policy and surveillance efforts**
- Discuss resource needs and opportunities for EU and national **funding and collaborations** to support hepatitis-related cancer prevention initiatives

Intended impact

Increase awareness of the importance of targeting viral hepatitis, as a major cause for liver cancer, by building on the EU council recommendations/Europe's Beating Cancer Plan. .

Thank you

- For your presence
- For your input in this meeting
- For all the efforts

Wish you all a fruitful meeting