



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

MEETING INFORMATION

LIST OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR THIS ACTIVITY

- 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

PARTICIPANTS (± 50 PARTICIPANTS)

- Public health experts, policy makers, healthcare workers, civil society and academics/experts involved in prevention and control of viral hepatitis
- VHPB advisors
- Some selected observers

EXPECTED 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.

VENUE

Antwerp, Belgium

MEETING OUTLINE

DAY 1 – 27 MARCH 2025

SESSION 1: OPENING AND OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING

Chairs: Mojca Matičič and Thomas Vanwolleghem

09:00-09:40 **Welcome words and Tour de table**

SESSION 2: VIRAL HEPATITIS IN EUROPE'S BEATING CANCER PLAN AND THE EU COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

Chairs: Markus Peck-Radosavljevič and Maria Buti

09:40-10:00 **A Historical Overview on the Role of Hepatitis B and C Viruses as Aetiological Factors for Hepatocellular Carcinoma**

Massimo Colombo

Past Chair Department of Medicine and Gastroenterology University Policlinic Hospital, Milan, and EASL International Liver Foundation, Geneva

10:00-10:20 **Epidemiological Insights into viral-induced Hepatocellular Carcinoma within the Framework of WHO's Global Hepatitis Elimination Strategy**

Maud Lemoine

St Mary's Hospital, Imperial College London

10:20-10:50 **The European Code Against Cancer (ECAC): The need for updating EU Council Recommendations for public and policy makers to prevent HCC**

Mojca Matičič (*University Medical Centre Ljubljana, Slovenia*)

Francesco Negro (*University of Geneva, Switzerland*)

10:50-11:00 Q|A

11:00-11:30 COFFEE BREAK

SESSION 3: VIRAL HEPATITIS VACCINATION REDUCES THE RISK FOR LIVER CANCER

Chairs: Silvia Bino and Sandra Dudareva

11:30-11:50 **Keynote lecture: [Vaccination against hepatitis B as prevention for hepatocellular carcinoma](#)**

Heiner Wedemeyer

Hannover Medical School, Germany

11:50-12:10 **[The First 30 Years of the Universal Hepatitis-B Vaccination-Program in Italy: A Health Strategy with a Relevant and Favorable Economic-Profile](#)**

Paolo Bonanni

University of Florence, Italy

12:10-12:25 **Monitoring progress towards elimination of hepatitis B and C in the EU/EEA, focus on HBV vaccination.**

Erika Duffell

ECDC

12:25-12:45 **Prevention of viral hepatitis induced HCC through HBV vaccination in vulnerable populations (10 min each)**

- **Hepatitis B infection and immunity in migrant populations**

Philippa C Matthews

University College London, UK

- **Cancer-preventing vaccination programs in prison: promoting health equity in Europe**

Nicola Cocco

Saints Paul and Charls Local Health Authority (Milan, Italy) / RISE-Vac

12:45-13:00 Q|A

13:00-14:00 LUNCH BREAK

SESSION 4: TREATMENT OF VIRAL HEPATITIS AS CANCER PREVENTION STRATEGY

Chairs: Rui Tato Marinho and Thomas Vanwolleghem

14:00-14:15 **The risk of HCC decreases after NAs treatment in Caucasians with chronic hepatitis B: The role of PAGE B score**

Rafael Esteban

Vall d'Hebron Research Institute, Barcelona, Spain

14:15-14:30 **Treatment of Chronic hepatitis D with Bulevertide**

Maria Buti

Hospital General Universitario Valle Hebron, Barcelona, Spain

14:30-14:40 Q|A

14:40-15:00 [Clinical outcomes in patients with chronic hepatitis C after direct-acting antiviral treatment: a prospective cohort study](#)

Stanislas Pol

Institut Pasteur, Paris, France

15:00-15:20 [Inequities in primary liver cancer in Europe: The state of play](#) ONLINE

Loreta Kondili

National Centre for Global Health, Rome, Italy

15:20-15:40 Q|A

15:40-16:10 COFFEE BREAK

SESSION 5: SCREENING AS PREVENTION FOR VIRAL HEPATITIS INDUCED HCC & LINKAGE TO CARE

Chairs: Stéphane Chevaliez and Erika Duffell

16:10-16:30 [Hepatocellular Cancer Surveillance in Patients with Advanced Chronic Liver Disease](#)

Sven Francque

Antwerp University Hospital, Antwerp, Belgium

16:30-16:50 [EASL position paper on clinical follow-up after HCV cure – Is it time to refine HCC surveillance?](#)

Pierre Nahon

Université de Paris, France

16:50-17:00 Q|A

SESSION 6: PANEL DEBATE

VIRAL HEPATITIS AND CANCER REGISTRIES: WHAT OPPORTUNITIES EXIST?

Chairs: Mojca Matičič and Sema Mandal

17:00-18:00 **Introduction to cancer registries and panel debate on how viral hepatitis and cancer data may be linked** (Introductions + discussion)

- *European Cancer Organisation - Silvia Romeo*
- *European Cancer Information System (ECIS) – Giorgia Randi*
- *European Network of Cancer Registries (ENCR) / Netherlands Cancer Registry – Otto Visser*
- *CDA - Ivane Gamkrelidze (Online)*
- *IARC/ WHO – Harriet Rumgay*
- *WHO EUR – Stela Bivol (Online)*

18:00 Closing of DAY 1

DAY 2 – 28 MARCH 2025

SESSION 7: BARRIERS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR PREVENTING VIRAL HEPATITIS INDUCED HCC, INCLUDING HEALTH INEQUITY, GOOD PRACTICES AND THE WAY FORWARD

Chairs: Angela Dominguez and Paolo Bonanni

09:00-09:20 **Good practice: HCC elimination through viral hepatitis management in the country of Georgia**

Anna Khoperia

National Center for Disease Control and Public Health, Georgia

09:20-09:40 **The patient's perspective: Is awareness and prevention for liver cancer among patients, their families, risk groups, adequate?**

Milan Mishkovikj

ELPA

09:40-09:50 **Prioritising viral hepatitis elimination to prevent liver cancer Gaps, Successes and Good Practices**

Aina Nicolàs

VH-COMSAVAC, ISGlobal, Barcelona, Spain

09:50-10:30 **Open floor discussion** - What can we achieve together on cancer prevention? Actions needed at the EU level. Moderated by;

- Silvia Romeo – *European Cancer Organisation*
- Sandra Dudareva - *Robert Koch Institute, Berlin, Germany*

10:30-11:00 COFFEE BREAK

SESSION 8: GROUPS DISCUSSION

Chairs: Greet Hendrickx and Sharon Hutchinson

11:00-12:00 **BREAK OUT GROUPS**

12:00-12:30 Reporting break out groups by group leaders

12:30-14:00 LUNCH BREAK

SESSION 9: CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING

Chairs: Pierre Van Damme

14:00-14:40 **Meeting summary**

David FitzSimons (VHPB rapporteur)

14:40-15:00 **Concluding remarks & closing of the meeting**