

Viral hepatitis more deadly than HIV in Europe

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Mortality from viral hepatitis is significantly higher than from HIV/AIDS across EU countries, according to results from The Global Burden of Disease Study 2010 (GBD 2010) which was announced for the first time today at the International Liver Congress 2014.

GBD 2010 is the most recent version of a large epidemiological study funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and coordinated by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) at the University of Washington.

In the EU, in 2010, there were more than 10 times as many deaths due to viral hepatitis as there were HIV-attributable deaths. Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) and Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) are estimated to have caused nearly 90,000 deaths that year in the EU (HCV nearly 57,000 deaths, HBV nearly 31,000 deaths), while there were just over 8,000 deaths from HIV/AIDS.

Presenting these thought-provoking figures, EASL's Vice-Secretary Dr. Laurent Castera from the department of Hepatology, Hôpital Beaujon in Paris said: "GBD 2010 is making a critical contribution to our understanding of present and future health priorities for countries and the global community. Although HIV/AIDS undeniably remains a key global health priority, the higher mortality from viral hepatitis than from HIV/AIDS in the EU means that hepatitis B and C must clearly now be counted among the top global and local priorities for health."

"Additional resources are needed to prevent, detect and treat hepatitis B and C in order to address these imbalances in major preventable causes of human death," Dr Castera added.

The Global Burden of Disease Study 2010 is the largest ever systematic effort to describe the global distribution and causes of a wide array of major diseases, injuries, and health risk factors. GBD 2010 has collated estimates of 291 diseases and injuries and 1,160 sequelae to identify the causes of human death worldwide

Using country-level and regional causes of death, mortality attributed to HBV, HCV and HIV/AIDS between 1990 and 2010 has been compared across Europe, by region and for specific countries. These findings have then been compared to global trends.

Globally, deaths from both viral hepatitis and HIV increased from 1990-2010 with HIV/AIDS ranking 6th (1.47 million deaths) and viral hepatitis B and C combined ranking 9th, with 1.29 million deaths in 2010.

Whereas HIV-related deaths in the EU fell by more than half following the late 1990s, in Eastern Europe HIV mortality has risen sharply. "This goes some way to explaining why [mortality](#) from [viral hepatitis](#) does not appear to be higher than that of HIV/AIDS in other areas of Europe outside of the EU," concluded Dr Castera.

More information: B.C. Cowie et al., EUROPEAN RESPONSES IN FOCUS: COMPARING VIRAL HEPATITIS AND HIV RELATED DEATHS IN EUROPE 1990-2010 IN THE GLOBAL BURDEN OF DISEASE STUDY 2010. Abstract presented at International Liver Congress 2014

Provided by European Association for the Study of the Liver

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