

hepc.bull

Canada's Hepatitis C News Bulletin
www.hepcbc.ca

MP HEALTH CRITIC MURRAY RANKIN GETS TESTED FOR HEP C

On April 17, 2015, Official Opposition Health Critic MP Murray Rankin showed his support of Baby Boomer testing for hepatitis C by “rolling up his sleeve” for the simple blood test. HepCBC was there to record this special occasion which took place in Victoria’s Percuro Clinic. We applaud this kind of “hands-on” action, which shows leadership on the important health issue of un-diagnosed hepatitis C.



Murray Rankin, MP and Official Opposition Health Critic, is a Baby Boomer getting a one-time hepatitis C test, as specialists widely recommend for seniors.

Just before he took the test, Mr. Rankin said, “I think it’s important that hepatitis C testing be done without any stigma... I’m here to say as a Member of Parliament, it is something that everybody should do. It is something that is a wonderful health initiative and I’m pleased to be doing it, as well.”

It’s a great idea to find out your hepatitis C status, now that the disease is CURABLE in almost all patients, and with few if any side-effects. 75% of the people with hepatitis C in North America are Baby Boomers. They could have gotten it 30 or 40 years back and still not know it – from a forgotten blood transfusion, an unsanitary tattoo, or just one shared needle or cocaine straw – since hepatitis C destroys one’s liver “silently”. If Hep C

(Continued on page 3)

EXPERIMENT: ELIMINATION OF HEP C

Western Asia’s Republic of Georgia has a population of 5 million – of which 7% has hepatitis C. That’s approximately 350,000 HCV+ people—slightly more than the number infected with the disease in Canada. The country, with minimal resources for fighting such an epidemic, has teamed up with the maker of Sovaldi™ and Harvoni™ in an attempt to demonstrate to the world that hepatitis C can be eliminated, with careful planning and by using new hepatitis C direct-acting antiviral (DAA) drugs. The company, Gilead, is providing free drugs to patients during the first phase of the program. Georgia has committed to treating 5,000 patients the first year, while planning to ramp up to 20,000 per year.

Gilead hopes the information gathered in this pilot project will be useful to those who wish to develop global HCV elimination strategies. They also hope to see other pharmaceutical companies and international health organizations get together to fight this epidemic in much the way they have come to fight HIV/AIDS.

We wish this creative program success!

Source: www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/22/us-health-hepatitis-gilead-georgia-idUSKBN0ND1XU20150422

REQUEST: PATIENT INPUT HOLKIRA PAK

BC PharmaCare has issued a call for Patient Input into whether they should cover AbbVie’s new hepatitis C treatment, HOLKIRA PAK™ (ombitasvir, paritaprevir, ritonavir, and dasabuvir [±ribavirin]).

HepCBC is going to make a submission to BC PharmaCare, and URGENTLY requests input from those who have, or have ever had hepatitis C (and their caregivers). Our submission is only as good as the input we get from people like you!

You would have to answer a few questions and email us the answers by MIDNIGHT on SUNDAY, MAY 17th. Thanks so much! (Be sure to look over the Background Information below if you are unfamiliar with how this treatment compares to others).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT HOLKIRA PAK™:

<http://hepcbc.ca/holkira-pak-background-info/>

HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR INPUT; CLICK HERE:

<http://hepcbc.ca/questions-bc-pharmacare-holkira-pak/>

DOES HCV CAUSE CANCER?

Researchers at The International Liver Congress™ 2015 reported study results showing that people with hepatitis C have higher cancer rates—and not only for liver cancer, but also for NHL (non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma), kidney cancer, and prostate cancer. This large retrospective study, done at Kaiser Permanente in California during the years 2008-2012, looked at patients over 18 years old, and found cancer rates 2.5 times higher in those with hepatitis C (2 times higher if liver cancer wasn’t included). Some factors, such as diabetes, obesity, and tobacco and alcohol abuse, were not considered. Even so, the study’s authors agree that hepatitis C seems to be linked with a greater risk of cancer...another reason to get tested and cured!

Source: EASL Apr 24, 2015 www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2015/04/150424085700.htm

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Health Critic Gets Tested	1
Elimination / Patient Input / Cancer	1
Aboriginal Awareness / Marathon	3
Imm. Outreach / Integrated Clinics	4
Vancouver Office / Testing / Honour Roll	5
Conferences / Treatment Coverage	6
Care Programs / Compensation	7
Support Groups in Canada	8

ORDER OR DONATION FORM

NOTE: Ordering (or donating) via Credit Card or PayPal is available online at www.hepcbc.ca/hepcbc-order-form/ OR...

Fill out form below with a cheque made out to "HepCBC" - Send to our NEW address:

HepCBC
#20-1139 Yates Street
Victoria, BC V8V 3N2

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Prov. ____ PC _____

Home () _____ Work () _____

Email: _____

Monthly bulletin** through email....FREE*

Membership with voting privileges...FREE*

Bulletin through mail, Subscribe 1 year. \$10.00

Peppermint Patti's FAQs through mail...\$20.00

Donation enclosed.....\$ _____
 (You will receive an annual charitable tax receipt)

TOTAL ENCLOSED.....\$ _____

*Only name and email address required for emailed bulletin.

Membership also requires a postal address.

We will mail you a member package with pamphlets, yellow and red ribbon pins, information about volunteering opportunities, and how to participate in our annual general meeting, plus other ways to make your voice heard.

(Note: Nothing mailed to you from HepCBC will have ANY reference to hepatitis on the envelope.)

Registered Canadian charitable organization since 2001. No. 86800-4979-RR00001.

**Download the hepc.bull free (since 2001) at www.hepcbc.ca/hepc-bull-monthly-newsletter/

SUBMISSIONS: The deadline for any contributions to the hepc.bull® is the 15th of each month. Please contact the editors at jking2005@shaw.ca, (250) 595-3892. The editors reserve the right to edit and cut articles in the interest of space.

HOW TO REACH US:

EDITOR: **Joan King**
 PHONE: (250) 595-3892
 FAX: (604) 424-4374
 EMAIL: info@hepcbc.ca
 WEBSITE: www.hepcbc.ca

HepCBC
 #20 1139 Yates St., Victoria, BC V8V 3N2

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The hepc.bull welcomes and encourages letters to the editor. When writing to us, please let us know if you *do not* want your letter and/or name to appear in the bulletin.

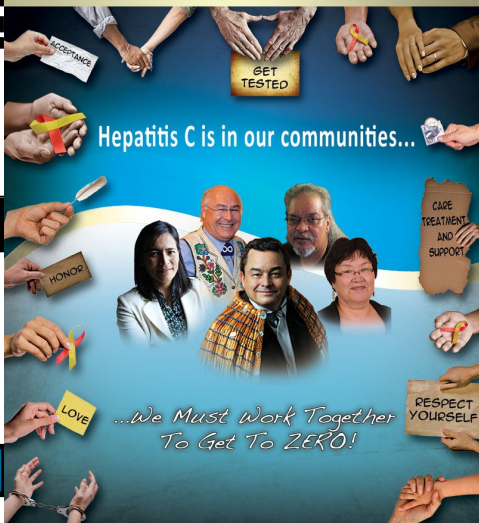
THANKS!!

HepCBC thanks the following institutions and individuals for their generosity: The late John Crooks, Allison Crowe, Billie Wood and Adrian, Victoria Positive Living Centre, Provincial Employees Community Services Fund, the Victoria Foundation, Dr. C. D. Mazoff, Judith Fry, and the newsletter team: Beverly Atlas, Diana Ludgate, Alp, Cheryl, Anamaria, and S.J.

Please patronize these businesses that have helped us: Top Shelf Bookkeeping, Merck Canada, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Roche Canada, Vertex, Gilead, Janssen, Boehringer-Ingelheim, AbbVie, Rx&D, VanCity, Country Grocer, and Thrifty Foods.

NEW!! UPDATED!! Peppermint Patti's FAQs, Version 10.1 !!

Download for free:
http://hepcbc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/FAQ_v10_1.pdf



For more information please visit:

 Funding Made Possible by Public Health Agency of Canada

HEPCBC LIVER WARRIORS 5TH YEAR AT MARATHON

Fighting HCV stigma, demonstrating the benefits of exercise for liver health, getting in shape, meeting new people, having fun, raising HCV awareness—that's what being on the Liver Warriors team is about. 2015 is the fifth year of the HepCBC Liver Warriors team at the GoodLife Fitness Victoria Marathon. This year the event will occur Sunday, October 11th, wending through Victoria's heritage downtown, into its elegant older neighbourhoods and gardens, and along its pristine beaches. There! So now you're coming, right?

This is not just a marathon, but a half-marathon and an 8k race, as well. People are welcome to either walk or run, but if you're a serious runner, this one is a "Boston Marathon Qualifying" course. Consider making the commitment to join our team this year. It's an amazing feeling, flying over that finish line!

The prices go up on May 15th, so take a look at the site now:

www.runvictoriamarathon.com/register.aspx

If you decide to go for it, be sure to join the "HepCBC Liver Warriors" team. It's on the 1/2 Marathon site already, so just select it from the dropdown list. For other events, you may have to create the team name yourself. Please let HepCBC know if you join the team by writing us at marathon.hepcbc@gmail.com.

Until May 15th, prices (which include a race T-shirt) are as follows:

- 1/2 Marathon (21.1 km) \$65
- Full Marathon (42.2 km) \$90
- 8k Road Race \$35

Hope you will decide to join our team!



PBAC AND NEW TREATMENTS (AUSTRALIA)

Australia's Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) is now recommending coverage of Sovaldi, Harvoni, and Daklinza/Sovaldi. This would be a great change to the way Hep C is treated in Australia. Sufferers hope the Dept. of Health and the pharmaceutical companies will finalize negotiations soon. Over 50 of the 230,000 Australians infected die each month, waiting for treatment. Hepatitis Australia was invited to meet with PBAC members before the drug submissions and recommendations were reviewed. The PBAC recommended not imposing "undue clinical restrictions" on the new treatments.

Source: www.hepatitisaustralia.com/newsarticles/

COMMEMORATING ABORIGINAL HEPATITIS C AWARENESS MONTH

Instead of summarizing, we'd like to quote in full from the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network website showcasing the second National Aboriginal Hepatitis C Awareness Campaign:

"The Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network, Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada and Hepatitis Services, BC Centre for Disease Control are partnering on the National Aboriginal Hepatitis C Awareness Campaign having agreed upon a mutual desire to work together to recognize the diversity and rights of Aboriginal Peoples regardless of residency, including the rights of Aboriginal Peoples to access and benefit from hepatitis C (HCV) prevention education and awareness, as well as related care, treatment and support to maintain a quality of life in a culturally appropriate manner.

"In that spirit, these partners are working together to launch the National Aboriginal Hepatitis C Awareness Campaign and month long activities will be held during the month of May. Four major cities, Ottawa, Halifax, Vancouver and Winnipeg have been identified to carry out these activities.

"Hepatitis C is a major concern amongst Aboriginal people in Canada. Poor health, poverty, low education, limited housing, high unemployment, and sanitation problems are important factors that promote the spread of hepatitis C infections among Aboriginal peoples. Factors that increase the risk of hepatitis C infections include the regular use of injection drugs and involvement in other high-risk activities at an early age. Aboriginal prisoners in Canada's jails may be at greater risk due to the high rates of infection among this population. As well, researchers have identified the previous widespread use of non-disposable medical equipment as a potential cause for hepatitis C infections among Inuit.

"Researchers believe that infection rates for hepatitis C are higher among Inuit and First Nations (1% to 18%) compared to other Canadians (0.5% to 2%). Research also suggests that the pattern of infections and the various factors that place Aboriginal people at risk are different from other Canadians and therefore hepatitis C prevention education and health promotion should be different as well. This is the second year that this annual national campaign will take place and it is planned that the more communities learn about this virus the better they will be able to protect themselves and their families."



Feb. 12, 2015 at CATIE "Deliberative Dialogue" meeting in Toronto. L > R Ken Clement, CEO of Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN); Ed Bennett of CAAN and Action Hepatitis Canada (AHC); Elena Kanigan, Strategic Policy Lead for HIV/AIDS Policy & Planning, First Nations Health Authority; and Cheryl Reitz, HepCBC Volunteer and AHC Vice-Chair.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

OTTAWA Launch: May 1, time 11 am - 2 pm at Parliament Block, Ottawa, Ontario. Co-host Pauktuutit Inuit women of Canada

HALIFAX, Week Two: May 11, time 1 pm—4 pm at "To Be Announced."

WINNIPEG, Week Three: Date and Time "To Be Announced."

RED DEER, Week Four: May 19, time 9 am to 4 pm at Sheraton Red Deer Hotel, 3310 50th Avenue. Co-hosts Shining Mountains and CAAN.

VANCOUVER, Week Five: May 31, time 1 pm—4 pm at "Canuck Family Ed. Centre" of Britannia Community Services Centre, 1661 Napier St. Hosts: members of World Hepatitis Day Vancouver 2015 Committee.

SASKATOON, Week Six: June 6, time 3 pm—6 pm at STATION 20, 1120 20th Ave. West. Co-hosts SIDCN and AIDS Saskatoon. "A Women's Liver Health Fair."

Be sure to check www.caan.ca/national-aboriginal-hepatitis-c-awareness-campaign/ for updates.

RESOURCES

Many resources are available online including brochures, posters, and Guide for Getting Ready for Treatment. Please click on the links to obtain further information.

Brochures www.caan.ca/hepatitis-c/

Posters www.caan.ca/hepatitis-c-posters/



(TESTED—Cont'd from page 1)

is found and treated early enough, terrible complications such as liver cancer, cirrhosis, liver failure, and transplant can be avoided.

Consequently, one-time-only testing of all Baby Boomers is now recommended by the US Center for Disease Control, the Canadian Liver Foundation, the Canadian Association for the Study of the Liver, HepCBC, and now by Mr. Rankin. We urge you to ask your mayor, City Council member, MLA, or MP, "Have you been tested for hepatitis C? It's the responsible thing to do!" And if you haven't yet, ask your doctor to write you a referral for hepatitis C testing at your 2015 Annual Checkup! Once you've done it – as long as you are not involved in any high-risk activities – you won't have to get tested again.



Murray Rankin, MP and Official Opposition Health Critic, with hepatitis C treatment nurses at Victoria's Percuro Clinic, discussing why Hep C testing is so important!

When it was all over, with his sleeve rolled back down, Murray tweeted: "Thank you for all your work to raise attention to testing! Glad I could help." HepCBC encourages other community leaders and political figures to follow suit, helping to erase the stigma and fear commonly associated with hepatitis C testing. As more Baby Boomers get tested and treated, the healthier, stronger, and more vibrant Canada's senior population will become.

Sources:

www.cmaj.ca/content/185/15/1325

www.liver.ca/newsroom/press-releases/29-01-2013-CLF-recommends-hepC-testing.aspx

www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/ccdr-rmtc/14vol40/index-eng.php



Source: www.caan.ca/national-aboriginal-hepatitis-c-awareness-campaign/

IMMIGRANTS SHARE OUTREACH IDEAS

116,428 Canadians with hepatitis C were born outside Canada, making up at least 35% of all the HCV+ people in Canada. Most of these were infected through substandard healthcare practices in their country of origin. (In contrast, 75,602 of Canada's HCV+ population are former intravenous drug users [IDUs] and 66,000 are current IDUs.) Finding these immigrants and curing them of hepatitis C will be a major public health challenge, given language and cultural barriers as well as uncertainty, stigma, and fear of possible consequences of disclosure.

The Canadian Society for International Health held a "HCV Services for Immigrants in Canada: Challenges, Opportunities and Lessons Learned" workshop on March 11, 2015 in Toronto, to explore ways of confronting this epidemic among Canada's immigrant population. Three HepCBC volunteers, all immigrants to Canada with lived experience of hepatitis C, were invited to present on "Immigrant Outreach by an HCV Patient Group in British Columbia."



HepCBC speakers Nancy Neel, Phung Pham, and Cheryl Reitz preparing to speak at the Canadian Society for International Health conference.

Nancy Neel, a medical lab technologist of Indian origin who was born and raised in Thailand and immigrated to Canada in 1970 at the age of 14, emphasized the value of family for immigrants living with hepatitis C.



Phung Pham at the podium, sharing her story.

Phung Pham, a hospice nurse from Victoria who immigrated to Canada with her husband and young family as "boat people", explained how she supports Vietnamese immigrants such as herself when they are going through treatment, and encourages those who are afraid or nervous to go get tested. Like Nancy, she also emphasized the importance of family to immigrant patients, and concern about how their loved ones might react when they find out a family member has the disease. Immigrant patients often worry about fulfilling their family responsibilities and don't want to create stress for others, but strong family ties can also provide them with a great support team during treatment.

Cheryl Reitz immigrated from the USA in the mid-1970s; unlike the other two, she did not come from a country in which hepatitis C is considered to be "endemic." She presented a slideshow of some of the outreach work HepCBC has been doing in the immigrant community in our province.

We came away from the conference amazed at the very positive response to our presentation, because we know we are only beginning to do this outreach, and thought others would be far more advanced in Canada's larger cities. We found that all of us are struggling, and were delighted at the great willingness to share resources—especially translation of basic information into all of the many languages of Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and sub-Saharan Africa, from where so many HCV+ Canadians have come. We made a commitment to keep in touch with others in this group, and continue to use World Hepatitis Day as a natural platform for collective immigrant outreach initiatives in Canada.

To watch HepCBC's presentation, go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=WOjC9eFWYBI&index=6&list=PL0ukP0sEaM9oreEOWT_mvhOkD2M_oOBQp

To watch the entire conference, go to www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL0ukP0sEaM9oreEOWT_mvhOkD2M_oOBQp

Sources: www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/ccdr-rmtc/14vol40/dr-rm40-19/surveillance-b-eng.php and *Guidelines for the Screening and Treatment of Persons with Hepatitis C Infection*, World Health Organization, 2014.



INTEGRATED HEALTH CLINICS

We at HepCBC get calls all the time from people who have been recently diagnosed with hepatitis C. We try to make it clear to the caller that we are not medically trained, and we do not ask or care how he or she got the disease. We do not judge. Our only objective is to guide the caller to find the best way of dealing with the disease. Personally, I tell the caller that I am an experienced patient, a volunteer, and, having been through 5 treatments and finally getting rid of the disease, I am very pro-treatment. At the same time, I accept the fact that they may be distrustful of treatment, and don't push it.

I urge them to get their vaccinations for Hep A and B and pneumonia, their FibroScan and ultrasound, and that they keep copies of all their tests and reports.

Some callers don't have a family doctor. Some have found long wait lists for specialists. I insist that anyone with a diagnosis of Hep C should see a specialist, and in most cases, should get a second opinion about any course of treatment.

I feel uncomfortable referring callers to the integrated services clinics because they may think they are only for IV drug users. That is not the case. Many—if not most—of those clinics will take on 'non-street' people also, have really experienced Hep C doctors and offer quick access to testing and treatment.

These clinics give 'street' people the stable environment needed to complete treatment. Many provide access to pain clinics, housing opportunities, help in getting to medical appointments, counselling, meals, support groups, nursing services, clinical trials, and guidance, depending on the individual clinic. You can find some of them on the last page of this bulletin. If this is your situation, please give the clinic nearest you at least one try.

Here's an example of one: "The Vancouver Infectious Diseases Centre uses a multidisciplinary care model for the delivery of specialty health care providing expert, state-of-the-art diagnosis and treatment of chronic infectious diseases and related conditions (including addiction and pain management), with a focus on HIV and HCV infections." You can get more info here: www.vidc.ca/

If you have a problem finding one, you can call or email us confidentially for more information or help in finding such a clinic near you. If we don't know the answer to your question, we'll find out. And we're here to chat. **Contact: info@hepcbc.ca OR phone Peer Support Line (NEW #s!) Vancouver: 604-259-0501 The rest of BC: 778-655-8000**

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR OUR VANCOUVER OFFICE!

HepCBC's new office in downtown Vancouver is looking for volunteers to help 'people' it (well, we decided the verb 'to man an office' is too sexist!) Right now we're just trying to set up regular office hours, so we need to find dependable volunteers able to commit to attending an interview, signing a confidentiality form, a free police check, training, and doing their best to keep to a regular schedule. We'll try to match you to the best position for your skill set and personality. We have quite a variety of jobs from translation to writing articles, making ribbon pins, answering the helpline, and delivering pamphlets to doctors offices. If you are bored and looking for a meaningful and interesting volunteer position, contact us *any* of these ways:

Fill out our **ONLINE Volunteer Application Form:**

<http://hepcbc.ca/hepcbc-volunteer-application-form/>

Email us:

info@hepcbc.ca

Visit us (phone ahead first to make sure office will be open):

HepCBC Vancouver
Room 206A, 938 Howe Street,
Vancouver, BC V6Z 1N9

Phone us:

Office: 604-259-0500

Lower Mainland peer support line:
604-259-0501 (NEW!)



SVR HONOUR ROLL

Have you been undetectable for a minimum of 12 weeks after treatment? Give others hope. Add your name! Congratulations to our friends:

1. **GJ** - SVR Dec 1998 - IFN/RBV 52 wks - Dr. Anderson /Natalie Rock, Vancouver, BC.
2. **Jeanie Villeneuve** - Oct 2000 - Schering IFN/RBV
3. **Amberose** - (GT2a/2c) - SVR 2000 - Schering IFN/RBV 24 wks
4. **KG**-Transfused 1987 (treatment naïve GT2A/2C) IFN/RBV 24 wks, 2003-2004, Toronto. SVR confirmed 2014
5. **Darlene Morrow** - (GT1 relapser) - Mar 2004 - Hyperthermia/Induction + pegIFN/RBV.
6. **Kirk Leavesley** - (GT1) - 2004 - Roche
7. **Beverly Atlas** - (GT1a) - 2005/2006 - Albuferon/RBV 44 wks
8. **Steve Farmer** - 2008 (Transplant Vancouver 2005) IFN/RBV 72 weeks.
9. **Gloria Adams†** - (GT1b relapser) - Fall 2009 IFN/RBV/telaprevir 48 wks - Drs. Erb & Yoshida, Vancouver, BC)
10. **Don Crocock** - (GT1 Stage II) - Dec. 2010 IFN/RBV - 48 weeks
11. **Daryl Luster** - (GT1a) - Feb 2011 - IFN/RBV/RO5024048 48 wks.
12. **Donna Krause** - (GT1 partial responder) SVR Nov 2011- Pegasys/Copegus, danoprevir/ritonavir/RO5024048 24 wks. Dr. Erb, Vancouver.
13. **[NEW] Hermione Jefferis** - (GT 1a) – SVR 2011, PegIFN/RBV, 48 wks, Dr. Partlow, Victoria, BC
14. **Cheryl Reitz** - (GT1b previous partial responder) SVR12 Mar 2013 - asunaprevir/daclatasvir 24 wks - Dr. Ghesquiere, Victoria, BC.
15. **Anita Thompson** - (GT1a treated 3 times) Cirrhosis - Apr 2013 - Pegasys/boceprevir 48 wks. Dr. M. Silverman, Whitby, ON.

16. **Leon Anderson** - (GT2 partial responder) SVR24 May 8, 2013 - GS-7977/RBV 16 weeks - Dr. Alenezi & Dr. Conway- VIDC - Vancouver.

17. **Joan King** - (GT1b treated 5 times) SVR24 June 2013 - asunaprevir/daclatasvir 24 wks Dr. Ramji, Vancouver, BC

18. **Jackie** - GT1 relapser) - SVR24 June 2013 - IFN/RBV/boceprevir 48 wks. Dr. Keith Bovell, Guelph, ON.

19. **Sandy J.** (GT 1a treatment naïve) Oct 31, 2013 - IFN/RBV/Victrelis 28 wks. Fran Faulkner, RN, Vancouver Island. Now SVR24.

20. **Andrew P.** - (GT 1a many prev treatment attempts over 10+ years, including Incivek Jan 2014.) sofosbuvir/ledipasvir + RBV 24 wks

21. **[NEW] Peter A Walker** - (GT1a, treatment-naïve) SVR Jan 2014 – PegIFN/RBV+boceprevir (, (Eprex – for low RBC count from RBV.)

22. **Diane Stoney** - Transfused 3/21/79 (GT 1a treatment naïve) 2/4/2014 - 12 wks placebo, then 12 wks on ABT-450/r+ABT-267+ABT-33+RBV. Dr. Tam, Vancouver, BC

23. **Coreen Kendrick** - (GT 1a treatment naïve) Mar 10, 2014 MK5172/MK8742 12 weeks Dr. Ramji, Vancouver, BC.

24. **Jack Swartz**—(Treated 3 times) Apr 2014 IFN/RBV/Victrelis, Dr. S. Wong, WHSC.

25. **Del Grimstad** July 2014, 12 weeks simeprevir/Sovaldi

26. **Linda May** (GT 1b transfused, treatment-naïve) 12 wks asunaprevir/daclatasvir . Dr. Tam, LAIR Centre.

27. **[NEW] Robin Tomlin** (GT1 treatment-naïve) SVR12 May 4, 2014 -- Harvoni 12 weeks--Dr. Yoshida VGH.

28. **Bob** (GT1a/HIV relapser) SVR24 Nov 2014 pegIFN/RBV/Incivek 24 wks, Dr. Montaner, Salt Spring Island, BC.

VANCOUVER HCV TESTING PILOT: “GET CHECKED ONLINE!”

HepCBC has just heard about a pilot testing program which includes HCV testing. It is brilliant how the system works; you don't even need to show your ID or BC Care Card. This would be an excellent way of testing immigrants and others who may not yet have insurance or official ID, or for anyone who is concerned about anonymity. Applicants first must visit phone the clinic in order to get a “promo code”. Next they fill out a questionnaire to determine which tests, including HCV, they are eligible for. They can print out an individualized lab form and take it to a select LifeLabs site. They are only asked to visit a clinic in person if there is a positive result. This pilot is only available in Vancouver so far: <https://getcheckedonline.com/Pages/default.aspx>

We 'test-drove' the questionnaire, and were disappointed that it only asks about engagement in risky activities such as IV or intranasal drug use, unprotected sex among males, or with someone who has an STI. HepCBC has been advocating for risk-based testing to be augmented with one-time-only age-cohort testing (recommendation: those born between 1945 & 1975, because there are so many folks in that age group, who simply have no idea that they might be 'at risk' of hepatitis C.) Besides the risk of liver failure, HCV+ people have double the risk of getting cancer as others, and if they are identified and treated, these risks will get lower every year. *Everyone* deserves at least one HCV test.

If you don't hear back immediately, don't worry; someone will contact you really soon.

Photo left is of our elegant new office's building entrance, 938 Howe St. Vancouver.



Our Victoria office is still open, of course:
Room #20, 1139 Yates Street,
Victoria, BC V8V 3N2
Office phone: 250-595-3892

Peer support phone for the REST of BC:
778-655-8000 (NEW!!)

CONFERENCES

Digestive Disease Week (DDW 2015)

16-19 May 2015
Washington, DC
www.ddw.org/

9th Annual World Vaccine Congress Asia

2-4 June 2015
Singapore
www.terrapinn.com/conference/vaccine-congress-asia/

2nd International Hepatitis Cure & Eradication Meeting

November 2015
Vancouver, Canada
www.virology-education.com/event/upcoming/2nd-international-hepatitis-cure-eradication-meeting-2015/

5th International Symposium on Viral Hepatitis and Liver Diseases (ISVHLD)

26-28 June 2015
Berlin, Germany
www.isvhld2015.org/

National African American Hepatitis C Action Day

25 July 2015
Worldwide
www.nblca.org/national-african-american-hepatitis-c-action-day-2014/

The Viral Hepatitis Congress 2015

10-12 September 2015
Frankfurt, Germany
www.viral-hep.org/

AFEF 76th Meeting 2015 (AFEF 2015)

30 Sep-3 Oct 2015
Toulouse, France
www.afef.asso.fr/congres/afef2015/index.phtml

National Hispanic Hepatitis Awareness Day

15 October 2015
Worldwide
www.hispanichepatitisday.org/

AASLD - The Liver Meeting

13 - 17 November 2015
San Francisco CA
www.aasld.org

APASL Single Topic Conference: HCV in India Conference 2015

18-20 December 2015
New Delhi, India
<http://apaslindia.com/index.html>

TREATMENT COVERAGE THROUGH CLASS ACTION SUITS

The Canadian Hemophilia Society (CHS) has updated its explanation of patient support programs for accessing hepatitis C treatment through the Hepatitis C January 1, 1986 - July 1, 1990 Class Actions Settlement. See PDF: www.hemophilia.ca/files/HT%20March%202015.pdf

People who are approved claimants under the Hepatitis C January 1, 1986 - July 1, 1990 Class Actions Settlement may be reimbursed for treatment costs and generally-accepted hepatitis C (HCV) medications that are not recoverable under any public or private health care plan.

Thanks to a collaborative effort between the CHS and Gilead Sciences Canada, Inc., the Gilead Momentum™ HCV Support Program can provide treatment upfront to those eligible for **Sovaldi™** (sofosbuvir) while the claimants wait for reimbursement from the 1986—1990 plan. Treatment options have continued to evolve quickly with, among other developments, the approval of **Harvoni™** (ledipasvir and sofosbuvir in a single tablet) by Health Canada in October 2014. This drug is now also included under the Gilead Momentum™ Program (1-855-447-7977).

With **Holkira Pak™** (paritaprevir/ritonavir/ombitasvir/dasabuvir tablets +/- ribavirin) having received Health Canada's notice of compliance in December 2014, the CHS collaborated with AbbVie Canada to ensure that their new treatment could also be made available to 1986-90 class action claimants via a patient support program. We are pleased to confirm that this is now the case thanks to their AbbVie Care Program (1-844-471-2273).

Janssen's **Galexos™ (simeprevir)** received its Health Canada notice of compliance earlier, in November 2013. The CHS has also worked with Janssen to ensure that patients prescribed Galexos™ can be provided with comprehensive support, including financial assistance, through Galexos' BioAdvance™ Patient Support Program (1-855-512-3740).

These patient support programs are designed to provide a wide range of customized services including reimbursement assistance, education, and ongoing disease management support. They will not only support health care professionals but also people living with HCV throughout their treatment journey to achieve a possible cure. This assistance will cover the entire treatment regimen that your doctor will prescribe, **including drugs from one or more pharmaceutical companies**. Part of the support is to help you and your health care provider determine if you qualify for treatment and medication cost reimbursement through the Hepatitis C January 1, 1986 - July 1, 1990 Class Actions Settlement. These programs offer assistance by providing drugs upfront to the 1986-90 claimants through their specialty pharmacy. Once the 1986-90 plan issues the reimbursement cheques to the patients for their treatment, they, in turn, must reimburse the pharmacy directly. To enroll in one of these programs, speak to your doctor or nurse, or call the numbers listed above for more information. You may also go to www.hemophilia.ca/en/hcv-hiv/hcv-treatment-support-for-1986-1990-claimants for more information.



COME VISIT US IN OUR NEW OFFICE IN VANCOUVER.
SEE DETAILS ON PAGE 5

ABBVIE CARE

With the approval of HOLKIRA™ PAK, AbbVie is launching AbbVie Care, which is a program that will provide best-in-class solutions to improve outcomes for people living with hepatitis C.

Canadians prescribed HOLKIRA PAK will have the opportunity to request to be enrolled in AbbVie Care. The signature care program is designed to provide a wide range of customized services including reimbursement assistance, education, and ongoing disease management support. AbbVie Care will not only support health care professionals but people living with genotype 1 hepatitis C throughout their treatment journey to achieve high cure rates in the real world.

For enquiries: 1-844-471-2273.

MERCK CARE™

MerckCare™ is a program to help people who have been prescribed PEGETRON™, VICTRELIS™ or VICTRELIS TRIPLE™. The program provides:

- assistance with reimbursement and/or insurance claims.
- financial assistance for co-pay/deductible for people who qualify.
- 24/7 nursing support by phone.
- multilingual assistance.
- home delivery of medication.

MerckCare™ provides all of these services free of charge.

To enroll in MerckCare™, you can call 1-866-872-5773 or your doctor or nurse can submit an enrollment form for you. Reimbursement specialists are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. EST Monday to Friday, excluding statutory holidays.

IBAVYR™

Pendopharm has established the IBAVYR™ Patient Support Program. The program will assist patients who have been prescribed IBAVYR™ (ribavirin tablets) with reimbursement navigation, financial assistance and pharmacy services. Case managers will support patients with insurance-related matters and assess eligibility for financial support. Pharmacy services include adherence support, medication delivery, and counseling.

To enquire or to enroll, you may call 1-844-602-6858 Monday–Friday 7am to 11pm EST.

BIOADVANCE®

JANSSEN's GALEXOS™: BioAdvance® program can assist you in many ways during your treatment. This includes compiling and submitting, on your behalf, all the forms and documents required by your insurance company to request coverage of GALEXOS™, and following up with your insurer to get you the best coverage possible. If you don't have private insurance, the GALEXOS™: BioAdvance® program will investigate public assistance programs that can help pay for your treatment. Whichever type of coverage you have, if your insurance does not fully cover the cost of treatment, the GALEXOS™: BioAdvance® program can usually coordinate and provide financial assistance to help you get treated. Finally, the program can offer many other types of support, and your doctor and members of your healthcare team will work with the GALEXOS™: BioAdvance® Program to develop a customized approach to best support you throughout the course of your treatment. Contact: 1-855-512-3740

MOMENTUM™ SUPPORT

To learn more about SOVALDI™ or the Momentum Program™ in Canada, the patient should speak to his/her doctor or nurse, or call the Gilead Sciences Canada medical information line at 1-866-207-4267. Eligible patients may receive an integrated offering of support services for patients and healthcare providers throughout the entire treatment journey, including:

- Access to dedicated case managers/reimbursement navigators to help patients and their providers with insurance-related needs, including identifying alternative coverage options through private, federal and provincially-insured programs.
- The SOVALDI™ Co-pay assistance program, which will provide financial assistance for eligible patients who need help paying for out-of-pocket medication costs.
- Medication delivery services.
- Compliance and adherence programs.

PEGASSIST

The PegAssist Reimbursement Assistance Program provides reimbursement coordination assistance for patients who have been prescribed Pegasys or Pegasys RBV. The program will assist in securing funding for patients to ensure that they can start, stay on, and complete their treatment successfully. PegAssist Reimbursement Specialists are available (Monday to Friday, 10 AM - 6 PM EST) by calling: 1-877-PEGASYS or 1-877-734-2797. Patients can also obtain a program enrollment form from their nurse/physician to gain access to the program.

The program provides financial aid to qualified patients, alleviating financial barriers which may prevent patients from starting treatment, i.e., deductibles and/or co-payments. In partnership with CALEA Pharmacy, the program can conveniently deliver the medication directly to patients' homes or to the clinics.

NEUPOGEN

Amgen has a program for patients who have been prescribed Neupogen. Dependent on specific criteria, some patients may be able to obtain Neupogen on a compassionate basis free of charge **as long as it is prescribed and dosed in accordance with the approved product monograph**. This service is accessed through the Victory Program: 1-888-706-4717.

INCIVEK CARE

Vertex's Incivek Care Patient Assistance Program supports patients with the reimbursement process for Incivek (telaprevir) treatment (Incivek, pegIFN, ribavirin). It will give you an efficient assessment of your options and eligibility. You may qualify to receive co-payment and other financial assistance to supplement your private and provincial drug program coverage. The program also provides dispensing and home delivery options, and expert treatment advice. Call the Support Line at 1-877-574-4298. (Select option 2 for English, then 2 for Incivek Care.)

COMPENSATION

Class Action Suit Hotline: 1-800-229-5323 ext. 8296
Health Canada Compensation Line: 1-888-780-1111
Red Cross Compensation pre-86/post-90 Registration: 1-888-840-5764 HepatitisC@kpmg.ca
Ontario Compensation: 1-877-222-4977
Quebec Compensation: 1-888-840-5764

CLAIMS ADMINISTRATOR 1986-1990

Claimants may be reimbursed for costs of treatments and accepted hepatitis C medications not covered by public or private healthcare plan while they wait for reimbursement from the 1986-1990 plan.

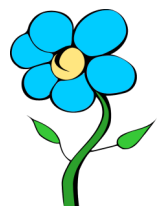
Administrator 1-877- 434-0944
www.hepc8690.com
info@hepc8690.com

Pre-86/Post-90

Administrator 1-866-334-3361
preposthepc@crowco.ca
www.pre86post90settlement.ca

Settlement Agreement:

www.pre86post90settlement.ca/PDFs/SA/



**YOU
HAVE THE RIGHT TO
COPIES OF YOUR
TESTS**

SUPPORT BC/YUKON

Armstrong HepCURE Phone support 1-888-437-2873

AIDS Vancouver Island The following groups provide info, harm reduction, support, education and more:

• **Campbell River:** Drop in, harm reduction, needle exchange, advocacy. 1371 C - Cedar St.

Contact leanne.wingert@avi.org 250-830-0787

• **Comox Valley** Harm reduction, counseling, advocacy. 355 6th St., Courtenay. Contact Sarah

sarah.sullivan@avi.org 250-338-7400

• **Nanaimo AVI Health Centre.** Counseling, advocacy. **NEW: 102-55** Victoria Rd Contact Anita for details. 250-753-2437

anital.rosewall@avi.org

• **Port Hardy** (Port McNeil, Alert Bay, Port Hardy, Sayward, Sointula and Woss) Drop-in kitchen. 7070 Shomcliffe Rd. Contact Shane, 250-949-0432 shane.thomas@avi.org

• **Victoria Access Health Centre,** drop in, disability applications, peer training. Support group Tues 12:30 PM, 713 Johnson St., 3rd floor, 250-384-2366 Hemi-one.jeffervis@avi.org

ANKORS Hepatitis C Project

Hep C Info, support for prevention, testing, treatment and living well with Hep C.

• **Boundary, Nelson, West Kootenay** Women's gathering monthly. 101 Baker St. Nelson. Contact Laura 1-800-421-2437 250-505-5506 ankorshepc@ankors.bc.ca

• **East Kootenay** 209 16th Ave N, Cranbrook, Contact Michelle 250-426-3383 1-800-421-2437 ankorshev@gmail.com

Castlegar Contact Robin 250-365-6137 eor@shaw.ca

Chilliwack PCRS Hep C Prevention, harm reduction. 45904 Victoria Avenue, Chilliwack. Contact Kim Lloyd 604-798-1416. lbirdsall@pcrs.ca www.pcrs.ca

Comox Valley Positive Wellness North Island Treatment/Pre & Post-treatment Support Group 2nd & 4th Wed., 615-10th St, Courtenay. Lunch. Contact Cheryl 250-331-8524. Cheryl.taylor@viha.ca

CoolAid Community Health Centre, Victoria. Meetings each Wed 10 AM and Thu 1:30 PM. 713 Johnson St. Support for all stages of treatment (deciding, during, after). Contact Roz rmilne@coolaid.org for treatment or group info.

Courtenay HCV Peer Support and Education. Contact Del 250-703-0231 dggimstad@shaw.ca

Cowichan Valley HCV Support Contact Leah 250-748-3432 r-lattig@shaw.ca

Haida Gwaii support. Contact Wendy wendy@wendyswellness.ca www.wendyswellness.ca

HepCBC info@hepcbc.ca, www.hepcbc.ca Call for office hours.

• **Victoria Peer Support:** 4th Tues. monthly 7-8:30 PM, Victoria Health Unit, 1947 Cook St. Contact 250-595-3892 Phone support 9AM-10 PM.

• **Fraser Valley Support/Info:** 604-576-2022

Kamloops ASK Wellness Centre. Chronic illness health navigation/support.

info@askwellness.ca 250-376-7558 1-800-661-7541 ext 232 or Merritt health housing & counseling 250-315-0098

www.askwellness.ca

Kamloops Hep C support group, 2nd and 4th Wed monthly, 10-1 PM, Interior Indian Friendship Society, 125 Palm St. Kamloops. Contact Cheri 250-376-1296 Fax 250-376-2275

Kelowna Hepkop: Phone support, meeting info.

Contact Lisa 1-866-637-5144 ljmortell@shaw.ca

Nanaimo - Central Island Hepatitis Service: Nurses & doctors available for info, support, treatment. Clinic located in Nanaimo. Doctor or self-referral. Contact 1-855-740-2607, sarah.hughes@viha.ca or shelby.munk@viha.ca

New Westminster Stride with Purpose "HepC" Support Group 1st & 3rd Fri monthly 10:30-11:30. BBP Nursing Team, refreshments/lunch. Contact: Stride Workers 604-526-2522, mail@purposesociety.org

Positive Wellness North Island-North Island Liver Service Info, support, treatment/pre-treatment groups. Doctor or self-referral. 1-877-215-7005 250-850-2605.

• **Courtenay:** 2nd Fri monthly 1PM, Drop-in, Comox Valley Nursing Centre (nurse)

• **Campbell River:** Treatment/pre&post-treatment support group 1st & 3rd Thu monthly 10-12 noon, Discovery Room, Sunshine Wellness Centre, Campbell River Hospital. Jody Crombie at 850-2620, jody.crombie@viha.ca

Penticton & District Community Resources Society, Harm Reduction Program, Meetings every 2nd Tues, 12:30-1:30 PM. 330 Ellis Street. Contact Melanie: 250-488-1376 or 250-492-5814

Positive Haven Info, harm reduction, support, drop in, clinic. 10697 135A St. Surrey. Contact Monika 604-589-9004.

Positive Living Fraser Valley (Abbotsford) Hep C support, Drop-in centre #108-32883 S. Fraser Way, M-F 10:30 AM-4:30PM. Info, support worker, rides to appointments in surrounding areas. Contact 604-854-1101 or plfvcentre@plfv.org

Powell River Hepatology Service Powell River Community Health, 3rd Floor-5000 Joyce Ave. Contact Melinda 604-485-3310 Melinda.herceg@vch.ca

Prince George Hep C Support Contact Ilse ilse.kuepper@northernhealth.ca

Sunshine Coast-Sechelt Healthy Livers Support Group Information/resources Contact Catriona 604-886-5613 catriona.hardwick@vch.ca or Brent 604-740-9042 brent.fitzsimmons@vch.ca

VANDU The Vancouver Area Network of Drug Users. 380 E Hastings St. M-F 10-4 Contact 604-683-6061

vandu@vandu.org www.vandu.org

Vancouver HCV Support Contact Beverly 604-435-3717 bailas@ielus.net

Vancouver Hepatitis C Support Group Contact 604-454-1347 or 778-898-7211, or call 604-454-1347 (Terry), to talk or meet for coffee.

Vernon telephone buddy, M-F 10-6 Contact Peter pvanbo@gmail.com Tel. 250-309-1358.

YouthCO HIV and Hep C Society of BC. Call for appts or drop in M-F 10-6. 205-568 Seymour St,

Vancouver 604-688-1441, 1-855-YOUTHCO Stewart info@youthco.org, www.youthco.org

Whitehorse, Yukon—Blood Ties Four Directions Contact 867-633-2437 1-877-333-2437 admin@bloodties.ca



OTHER PROVINCES

ONTARIO:

Barrie Hepatitis Support Contact Jeanie for info/ appointment

jeanievilleneuve@hotmail.com

Hamilton Hepatitis C Support Group 1st Thurs. monthly, 6-7 PM, Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre, 71 Rebecca St, Hamilton. Contact Maciej Kowalski, Health Promoter 905-522-3233 mkowalski@hucchc.com

Hep C Team, AIDS Committee of North Bay & Area. Education, outreach, treatment, individual & group support, harm reduction, needle exchange. 269 Main St. W, Suite 201, North Bay. Contact 705-497-3560, 1-800-387-3701 or hepccommcoord@gmail.com, www.aidsnorthbay.com

Hepatitis C Network of Windsor & Essex County Last Thurs. monthly, 7 PM, Teen Health Centre-Street Health Program Office, 711 Pelissier St., Suite 4, Windsor. Contact Andrea Monkman 519-967-0490 or hepcnetwork@gmail.com. <http://hepcnetwork.net>

Kingston Hep C Info HIV/AIDS Regional Service. Contact 613-545-3698, 1-800-565-2209 hars@kingston.net www.hars.ca

London Hepatitis Hep C Support 186 King St, London. For those infected as well as affected by Hep C. Contact: 519-434-1601, 1-866-920-1601 www.hivaidconnection.com

Niagara Health System – Hepatitis C Care Clinic (HCCC) Clinics:

New Port Centre-Port Colborne, 4 Adams Street - St Catharines, Niagara Falls Hospital. Education, counseling, individual/group support, treatment, outreach, and harm reduction. Contact 905-378-4647 ext 32554 and HCCC@niagarahealth.on.ca www.niagarahealth.on.ca/services/hepatitis-c-care

Oshawa Community Health Centre Hepatitis C Team Drop-in, lunch provided each Thurs. 12-1 PM, 79 McMillan St. www.ochc.ca Contact 1-855-808-6242

Owen Sound Info, support. Contact Debby Minielly dminielly@publichealthgreybruce.on.ca 1-800-263-3456 Ext. 1257, 519-376-9420 Ext. 1257, www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca

Peel Region (Brampton, Mississauga, Caledon) 905-799-7700

healthlinepeel@peelregion.ca

St. Catharines Contact Joe 905- 682-6194

Toronto CLF 1st Mon. monthly Oct.—June, 7:30 PM, North York Civic Centre, 5100 Yonge Street. Contact Billie 416-491-3353, ext. 4932.

bpotkonjak@liver.ca www.liver.ca

Thunder Bay Hep C support. Contact Sarah Tycholiz 807-345-1516 (or for 807 area only 1-800-488-5840)

Unified Networkers of Drug Users Nationally undun@sympatico.ca

York Region Hepatitis C Education Group 3rd Wed. monthly, 7:30 PM, York Region Health Services, 4261 Hwy 7 East, B6-9, Unionville. Contact 905-940-1333, 1-800-361-5653 info@hepcyorkregion.org www.hepcyorkregion.org

QUEBEC:

Quebec City Region Contact Renée Daurio 418-836-2307

reneedaurio@hotmail.com

CAPAHC support group meetings 3rd Thurs. monthly 6-8PM, 5055 Rivard St., Montreal) Contact 514-521-0444 or 1-866-522-0444

ATLANTIC PROVINCES

Hepatitis Outreach Society of NS. Info and support line for the entire province. Call 1-800-521-0572, 902-420-1767
Online Peer Support: info@hepns.ca www.hepns.ca

PRAIRIE PROVINCES:

Manitoba Hepatitis C phone and email support and outreach. Contact Kirk at info@mbhepc.org. Direct line: 1-204-231-1437

Manitoba CLF each Thu 1:30-3. 375 York Avenue, Suite 210, Winnipeg, Contact Bianca 204-831-6231 bpengelly@liver.ca

Medicine Hat, AB Hep C Support Group 1st & 3rd Wed. monthly, 6:30 PM, HIV/AIDS Network of S.E AB Assoc, 550 Allowance Ave. Contact 403-527-7099 bettyc2@hivnetwork.ca

To list Canadian groups here, please send details to info@hepcbc.ca by the 15th of the month. It's free!