THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT FRIENDS OF THE LIVER GROUP: WORKING WITH MEPS TO IMPROVE LIVER HEALTH ACROSS THE EU

Event hashtag: #LiverFriends

@MEPLiverGroup
www.easl.eu
EASL and the “Friends of the Liver” Members of Parliament (MEP) Group

*Brussels 27th May 2015*

Patrizia Burra

EASL EU Policy Councillor
Why liver disease?

- Liver diseases are extremely costly in terms of:
  - human suffering
  - general practitioner visits
  - hepatology, gastroenterology, infectious disease, endocrinology, cardiovascular disease, oncology, specialty visits
  - liver disease is affecting also young people therefore causing premature loss of productivity
In 2013:

- 29 million people in the European Union were documented as suffering from a chronic liver condition;
- liver cirrhosis accounted for around 170,000 deaths;
- liver cancer accounted for around 47,000 deaths.

Blachier M, J Hepatol 2013;58(3):593-608
• EASL issued a white paper entitled *The Burden of Liver Disease in Europe* – a review of available epidemiological data, this being a first milestone in EASL’s public health efforts, to further understanding about liver disease.
Most common liver diseases in Europe

- HCV
- HBV/ HDV
- Alcohol
- Non alcoholic fatty liver (NAFLD)
- Non alcoholic steato-hepatitis (NASH)
- Autoimmune diseases
- Liver cancer
Non alcoholic fatty liver disease

• It has been estimated that 52% of the EU population is overweight or obese.

• Increasing rate of overweight and obesity in adolescents.

(Statistics from 2012 from The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development)
Non alcoholic fatty liver disease

• Up to 44% of these people are likely to suffer from non-alcoholic fatty liver disease.

• It suggests that 116 million people in the EU suffer from this disease alone.

(Research from EASL and other liver organizations)
Deaths from liver cirrhosis in Europe

Age-standardized death rates per 100,000 population from liver cirrhosis in European countries, males and females aged 20–64; WHO mortality database 2000–2002

Zatonski WA, Eur Addict Res 2010;16(4):193-201
Friends of the Liver

• The “Friends of the Liver” Group was created in 2013 by MEPs and EASL.

• The objective is to raise awareness in the European Parliament and beyond to share interests, to inform decision making and to encourage communication on effective policies to reduce liver disease.
EASL and Friends of the Liver Group

• EASL would like to identify opportunities to significantly reduce liver mortality and decrease the burden of liver conditions in the EU by the end of 2020.

• EASL is putting particular emphasis on recommending tackling alcohol- and obesity-related liver conditions with evidence-based policy measures.

• Furthermore, there is a great potential to eliminate hepatitis C and control hepatitis B within the EU.
EASL Hepamap (Brussels December 2014):
areas of clinical and basic science research

1) Viral hepatitis: basic science
2) Viral hepatitis: clinical / translational
3) Alcoholic Liver Disease and Non-Alcoholic Liver Disease
4) Genetic and autoimmune diseases
5) Hepatocellular carcinoma: basic science
6) Hepatocellular carcinoma: clinical / translational
7) Cirrhosis and portal hypertension
8) Cholestatic and drug-induced liver disease
9) Liver transplantation
10) Acute liver failure and hepatic regeneration
11) Public health
Liver disease research

• During the past 30 years, liver disease research has delivered significant breakthroughs consistently.

• Mortality from liver cirrhosis has declined due to the reduction in alcoholic liver disease prevalence in some regions of Europe.

• The fall in the transmission of viral hepatitis C.

• Vaccination campaigns against viral hepatitis B.

Thomson SJ, Alcohol Alcohol 2008; 43:416-422
Blachier M, J Hepatol 2013; 58: 593-608
Trends in recorded alcohol consumption in Italy since 2000 (data obtained from the Global Information System on Alcohol and Health).
Alcohol Attributable Liver Cirrhosis Deaths

Rehm J, J Hepatol 2013
Epidemiology of HCV in Europe

- Prevalence varies from 0.4% in Sweden, Germany and The Netherlands to 2-3% in some Mediterranean Countries.

- 9 million people chronically infected with HCV (1.5 million infected with HIV).

- 86,000 deaths in 2002 because of HCV.

Mühlberger BMC Public Health 2009
Emiroglou, WHO Summit Conference October 2010
Hatzakis JVH 2011
COSMOS: Sustained virological response at 12 weeks after the end of treatment in treatment-naïve and prior null responders METAVIR F3–F4 (ITT)

SVR12 by HCV genotype 1 subtype and baseline Q80K
- Genotype 1b
- Genotype 1a without Q80K
- Genotype 1a with Q80K

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<th>SMV/SOF + RBV (weeks)</th>
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<td>26/27</td>
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HBV Vaccination

Incidence x 10^5 in 2009:
0–14 aa 0.01
15–24 aa 0.5
>24 aa 1.3
Total 1

Source: Sistema Epidemiologico Integrato Epatiti Virali Acute (SEIEVA), Rome

Zanetti Vaccine 2008
The hepatologist’s menu A.D. 2015

- HCV
- HBV
- Alcohol
- NAFLD
- Autoimmune
- Genetic
- HDV

Bar chart:
- F0-F1
- F2-F3
- F4
- > F4
The hepatologist’s menu A.D. 2025

NAFLD

Alcohol

HCV

HBV

Genetic

Autoimmune

The hepatologist’s menu A.D. 2025

F0-F1
F2-F3
F4
> F4
RISK OF LIVER CANCER AND OTHER MALIGNANCIES IN MEN WITH BMI ≥30

Hepatocellular carcinoma in Europe

(A) Estimated age-standardized incidence rates of liver cancer per 100,000 in 2008; WHO, GLOBOCAN, 2008. (B) Estimated age-standardized mortality rates per 100,000 for liver cancer in 2008; WHO, GLOBOCAN, 2008.
Liver transplantation

1. Evaluating tolerability and efficacy of new HCV direct-acting antiviral agents in patients in the waiting-list and in patients with HCV recurrence after transplant;

2. Liver steatosis as indication for liver transplantation in the U.S. has increased by 170% from 2004 to 2013 and steatosis is associated with an increased risk to develop cancer within the liver;

3. Better information why liver grafts are rejected in some patients and how we can reduce this with new more efficient immunosuppressants;

4. Validating improved allocation systems and performance of well-designed prospective studies and simulation models.
EASL/Friends of the Liver Group and other Collaborations

- Horizon 2020
- EU Health Programme 2014-2020
- ECDC
- WHO
- Patients associations
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Living With Liver Disease – a Patient’s Perspective

Tatjana Reic, President of the European Liver Patient Association (ELPA)

27 May 2015
The liver is in desperate need of friends! Why?

ELPA represents patients with a variety of liver diseases, which all have in common that

→ they are diagnosed by far too late,
→ they can lead to serious follow-on diseases, such as liver cirrhosis or cancer
→ they can be cured or well-controlled, provided an early diagnosis is being made
Hepatitis C:

Since 17\textsuperscript{th} January 2014, almost 16 month now, every EU Institution and national governments are speaking about Hepatitis C.

But only because of the price.

The marketing authorization for Sovaldi followed an accelerated assessment by the European Medicines Agency, a designation that is granted to new medicines of \textbf{major public health interest}.

What has changed?
Nothing!

Although there are cure rates available higher than 90 %, still

- We have very low diagnosis rates (in most countries less than 10 %)
- Very low treatment rates
- High numbers of death
- High numbers of late stages
- Only in some countries access to latest medication
- Still no EU Screening and prevention initiative, although in 2007 the European Parliament called for a Council Recommendation on Hepatitis C

So NGOs has worked on solutions……..!
Financial aspects:

**QUANTIFY RESEARCH**

**Burden of hepatitis C in Europe – the case of France and Romania**

Presented to: European Liver Patient Association
Version: Final version 2.1
Date: 2014-12-10
Hepatitis B and C: An action plan for saving lives in Europe
Alcohol:

In 2014 ELPA has organized the AWARH:

The theme was: The EU Alcohol Strategy – Act now. Since then the European Parliament adopted a very encouraging resolution on alcohol. But now?
On Monday 18th May Vytenis Andriukaitis, the EU's Health and Food Safety Commissioner, said that the executive has no intention of submitting a new strategy to reduce alcohol-related harm in Europe, suggesting that the issue will be tackled as part of a broad range of "risk factors" affecting chronic diseases.
Conclusion:

Chronis liver diseases are silent although it impose a huge burden on Europe´s societies.

It is more than urgent that:

Europe must step up its efforts to diagnose liver patients earlier, ideally before their disease has reached a late stage such as cirrhosis or cancer and to create effective prevention measures for all liver diseases:

viral hepatitis, alcohol, fatty liver and rare liver diseases
Conclusion II:

Friends:
The relationship between Latin *amīcus*, "friend," and *amō*, "I love," is clear, as is the relationship between Greek *philos*, "friend," and *phileō*, "I love." (http://www.thefreedictionary.com/friend)
Thank you for your attention!
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