

16th December 2009

Dear Colleagues,

Joining Forces to Raise Awareness of Cancer-Causing Viruses

In 2010, World Cancer Day will focus on raising awareness of cancer-causing infections, of which two of the most prevalent are the hepatitis B virus (HBV) and hepatitis C virus (HCV).

Primary liver cancer causes an estimated 598,000 deaths worldwide every year and approximately 80% of liver cancer is caused by the long-term consequences of infection with HBV and HCV. Vitaly, these diseases are preventable through safe healthcare and behavioural change that directly reduces exposure to specific risk factors. In the case of hepatitis B there is an effective vaccine available.

In recognition of the scale of the problem, the World Hepatitis Alliance (WHA) and the International Union Against Cancer (UICC) are joining forces to mark World Cancer Day on 4th February. At a global level, we are working together on the preparation of materials and coordinated media activity. However, we hope that both organisations' members will also cooperate to raise awareness of the link between viral hepatitis and cancer and promote prevention strategies in their own countries. This might include arranging a joint event, hosting a press conference or publishing a disease information leaflet.

We have established a Patient Group Liaison Lead to put members of both the WHA and UICC in touch with their national counterparts. Italo Goyzueta can be reached by email, Goyzueta@uicc.org, or telephone: +41 22 809 18 27. More information on UICC and WHA members can also be found on the [WHA website](#) and [UICC website](#).

World Cancer Day 2010 provides an excellent opportunity for cooperation toward our shared objectives, and the potential benefits are great. Working together our voice is louder, we are more persuasive and we can reach new audiences. We encourage you to take advantage of this unique opportunity in 2010 and look forward to hearing about the results.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely,



Charles Gore
President
World Hepatitis Alliance



Cary Adams
Chief Executive Officer
International Union Against Cancer