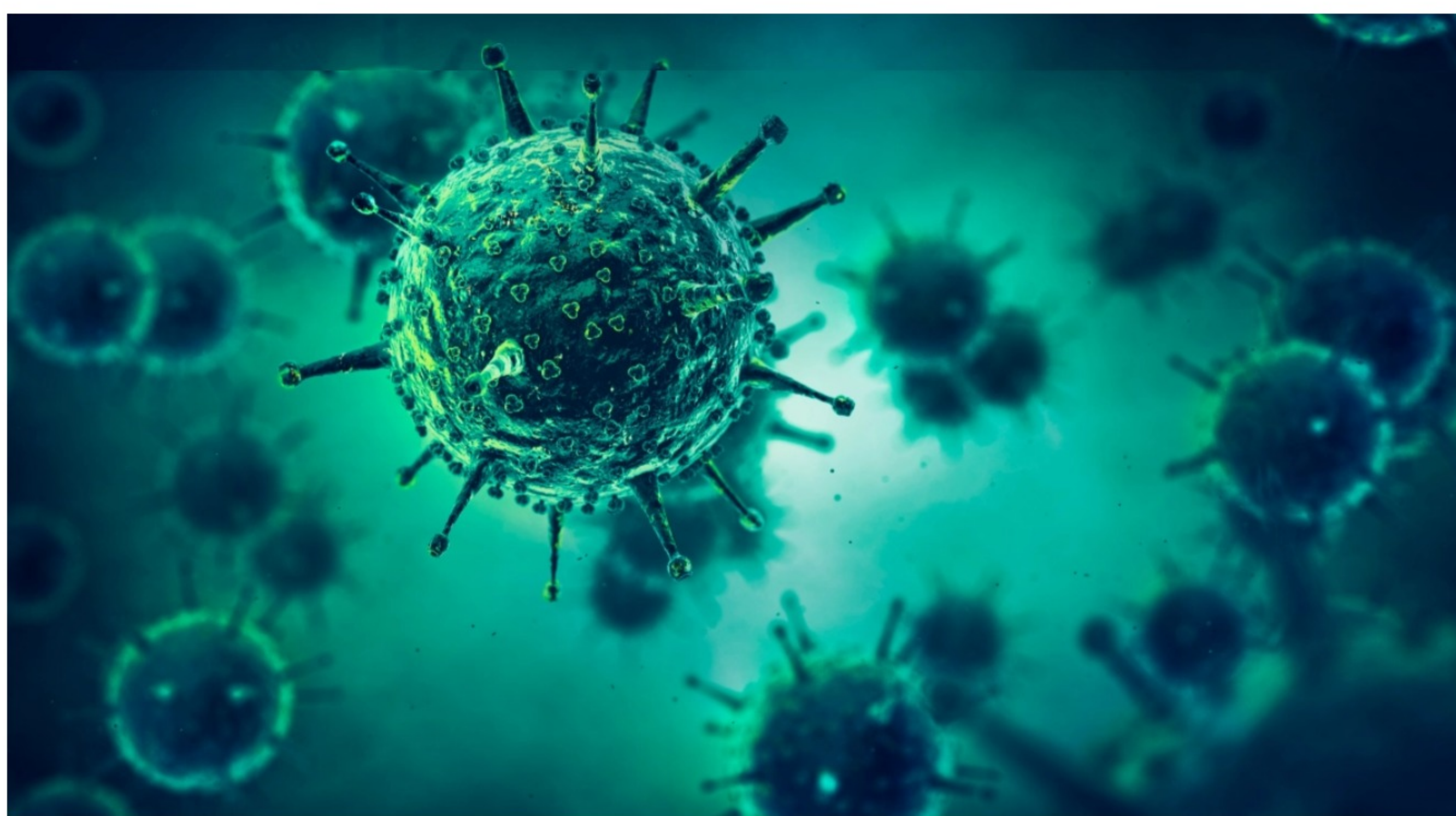


Partnerships

MSD & the fight against Hepatitis C

XXX 2022

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How we are partnering with the NHS to deliver hepatitis C elimination

If you are wondering how a pharmaceutical company like MSD is involved in a world leading initiative to find, test and treat people at risk of hepatitis C, then read on...

MSD is so proud to be part of the NHS Elimination programme which is a first of its kind programme, involving a close collaboration between NHS England and Improvement, the Hepatitis C Trust, Operational Delivery Networks (ODNs), the pharmaceutical industry (Abbvie, Gilead and MSD), Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS), the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSE) and Public Health England (PHE).

Chronic hepatitis C infection, caused by the hepatitis C virus (HCV), is thought to affect over 80,000 people in England.¹ Symptoms can take years to develop and as a result, many people don't know they have been infected.¹ If left untreated, HCV can lead to serious health problems including cirrhosis (scarring of the liver), liver failure and liver cancer (hepatocellular carcinoma, HCC).¹ This not only places a heavy burden on the individual, but on the NHS and the economy.^{2,3}

In 2016, the UK Government signed up to the World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Health Sector Strategy (GHSS) on Viral Hepatitis which commits participating countries to the elimination of (HCV) as a major public health threat by 2030.¹ NHS England is working to surpass the WHO target through a number of initiatives including a unique and innovative partnership¹ - The Hepatitis C Elimination Programme.

In this unique programme, a series of 'elimination initiatives' are being provided by the NHS and industry, which aim to identify potential patients, test for infection and offer treatment to everyone who needs it. Working with 24 Operational Delivery networks, which were set up across England help manage hepatitis C services at a local level, MSD is supporting elimination through four elimination initiatives:

Point of Care Testing (POCT): In partnership with Cepheid, we are rolling out Cepheid rapid HCV RNA testing equipment to prisons, community projects and outreach services. Delivering rapid finger-prick testing that delivers results in 1 hour.

Patient Search Identification (PSI): A case-finding tool which searches for coded HCV risk factors in patient records in primary care settings to identify potentially at-risk patients that should be reviewed and, if appropriate, tested.

Peer-to-Peer Support (P2P): Through partnership with the Hepatitis C Trust (THCT), we are providing a network of peer volunteers with lived experience of HCV to provide education, encouragement and support directly to patients throughout the treatment and care journey. Through this partnership with THCT we are also working to develop a model that is built within and led by the local community, to reach south Asian communities who, whilst having a higher prevalence of HCV infection than the general population, have often been excluded from receiving culturally relevant information and interventions.

Community Liaison Officers (CLO): Community Liaison Officers work with the operational delivery network clinical teams to align and coordinate hepatitis C services and provide outreach to patients attending clinics, as well as working in homeless hostels, night shelters and drug treatment centres.

To speak to a member of the team, please contact Elimination Programme Lead, Kuldip Sembhi at: Kuldip.sembhi@msd.com

¹ UKHSA Hepatitis C in England 2022 Report: Working to eliminate hepatitis C as a public health problem Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1057271/HCV-in-England-2022-full-report.pdf Last Accessed: March 2022

² Singh J, Longworth L, *Estimating The Cost Of Liver Transplantation In Patients Diagnosed With Chronic Hepatitis C And B In The UK*, 2014. Available online via: [http://www.valueinhealthjournal.com/article/S1098-3015\(14\)02760-0/fulltext](http://www.valueinhealthjournal.com/article/S1098-3015(14)02760-0/fulltext). Last accessed November 2019

³ Wright M, Grieve R, Roberts J, Main J, Thomas HC, Alexander G, et al., *Health benefits of antiviral therapy for mild chronic hepatitis C: Randomized controlled trial and economic evaluation*. Health Technology Assessment. 2006:10

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