



Tatjana Reic
HULOH/CATIH "Hepatos"

30 August 2007

***Fourth World Hepatitis Awareness Day
1st October 2007
European Parliament, Brussels
Altiero Spinelli Building, Room 3G3
12.30 – 14.00***

Dear Ms Reic,

On the occasion of World Hepatitis Awareness Day (WHAD), we would like to invite you to a high-level panel discussion on Hepatitis C which will take place on **1 October** at the European Parliament in Brussels **from 12.30 to 14.00h**.

A highly infectious blood-borne virus, Hepatitis C often leads to severe liver damage such as liver cirrhosis or cancer. As a result, Hepatitis C has become the leading cause of liver transplantations in Europe. These grave and often lethal consequences of a Hepatitis C infection frequently occur only after years of mild symptoms, turning the disease into a "silent killer".

Further to the European Parliament's Written Declaration on Hepatitis C, adopted on 24 March 2007 with an overwhelming majority of 470 signatures, it is now time to discuss how the EU can provide added value in the fight against Hepatitis C with regard to

- Surveillance & Screening;
- Awareness-raising among risk groups;
- Access to treatment.

Our expert panel on 1 October 2007 includes:

- **Prof. Henrique Barros**, Portuguese Presidency representative;
- EU Commissioner **Markos Kyprianou** (tbc);
- **Dr. Srdan Matic**, WHO Regional Office for Europe;
- **Prof. Jean-Michel Pawlotsky**, Scientific Secretary of the European Association for the Study of the Liver;
- Representative of the **European Centre for Disease Control and prevention**.

- **Dame Anita Roddick**, founder of the cosmetics chain "Body Shop", who was recently diagnosed with Hepatitis C after having been infected for more than 30

years;

We hope that you will be able to attend this important event and contribute to the debate with your expertise and input.

We look forward to seeing you on 1 October.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Hughes

Member of the European Parliament

Nadine Piorkowsky

President of ELPA