H.E. Dr Abdel Adawy, Minister of Health and Population, launches the landmark action plan.16 October 2014 – A comprehensive new national plan to prevent, treat and cure viral hepatitis has been launched by the Ministry of Health and Population, with support from WHO, United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other partners.

In what H.E. Dr Adel Adawy, Minister for Health and Population, has declared a medical revolution, this landmark initiative will make available a new treatment for Egyptians with late stage liver disease that is simpler to take and has fewer side effects than the treatment previously provided under Egypt's National Treatment Programme.

Some 500 000 people have so far applied online to be tested to see if they qualify to receive the treatment. The first 50 000 will start receiving treatment on 16 October 2014, via the 26 national liver treatment centres located around the country. In February 2015, a further 100 000 courses will be delivered to Egypt.

Chronic hepatitis, resulting from hepatitis B and C, leads tens of thousands of Egyptians to suffer and die from diseases such as liver cirrhosis and cancer every year.

Prior to the launch, the President of Egypt, Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, met with the Minister and remarked on his personal interest in the project, and his belief that prevention is a key priority in the efforts to reduce the burden of viral hepatitis in Egypt.

The plan of action provides a comprehensive set of preventative measures including surveillance, blood safety, hepatitis B birth dose vaccination and infection control. In 2015, WHO will develop a new global Injection Safety Initiative, which Egypt will be one of the first countries to benefit from.

“Nearly every home in Egypt is touched by hepatitis, and I applaud the Ministry for pursuing a balance between prevention and treatment,” remarked WHO Representative in Egypt Dr Henk Bekedam.

“Hepatitis is a disease that affects nations around the globe, and the work that is done here will benefit people worldwide.”

Related links

To register online for the new treatment

Speech of Dr Henk Bekedam

Care for your liver: think about hepatitis

Plan of action for the prevention, care and treatment of viral hepatitis, Egypt 2014–2018 [pdf 704kb]

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