

Symposium on Challenges in Prevention and Control of Hepatitis C

12th May 2015 BMICH Colombo, Sri Lanka

Hepatitis C infection (HCV) is a global public health issue and according to the recently published data, it has been revealed that a high prevalence of HCV infection is prevalent in Asian countries. To respond to this situation a symposium on "Challenges in Prevention and Control of Hepatitis C" was held on 12th May 2015 at the BMICH Colombo, Sri Lanka. The symposium was coordinated by the Epidemiology Unit and supported by the World Health Organisation, Country Office, Sri Lanka. Academic and technical professionals from Central and regional level government health units of Ministry of Health such as Epidemiology Unit, National STD/AIDS Control Programme, National Blood Transfusion Service (NBTS) and Medical Research Institute (MRI), and provincial level professionals including Regional Epidemiologists participated in the event. Representation was made from the Colleges, Private sector hospitals and Universities as well. The symposium was chaired by Director General of Health Services.

The purpose of this symposium was to build awareness and plan and implement preventing and control strategies in order to overcome implications of HCV and HCV co-infection with other viruses. This had enabled sharing of experience, knowledge, address issues related to HCV in Sri Lanka and also to provide recommendations to implement, preventing and control strategies to fight against Hepatitis C Virus.

The four presentations at the symposium were delivered as follows.

Dr. Ranjith Peiris (Consultant Gastroenterologist)	Hepatitis C: Clinician's Perspective of
Dr. Paba Palihawadena (Chief Epidemiologist)	Developing a surveillance Mechanism for Hepatitis B & C
Dr. Geethani Galagoda (Consultant Virologist)	Laboratory Surveillance Mechanism for Hepatitis B & C
Dr. Lakmali Morawaka (Consultant Transfusion Physician)	Preventive strategies of Hepatitis C at Blood Transfusion.

The presentations were followed by a stimulating panel discussion regarding HCV infection and related issues. It was a fruitful discussion with valuable inputs for a better surveillance mechanism and effective preventive and control strategies to combat Hepatitis B and C.

The team of the Epidemiology Unit would like to convey its sincere gratitude to all participants for their tremendous support provided, to make this symposium a success. Special thanks go out to WHO Country Office, Sri Lanka for their support and continued commitment.

