

National Liver Foundation launches Hep B eradication program

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Mumbai: On the occasion of World Hepatitis Day, National Liver Foundation (NLF), an NGO working towards eradication of Hepatitis B pan India, launched its project - Towards Hepatitis B Free Next Generation through targeted interventions. This multi-pronged All India campaign spearheaded by National Liver Foundation has the key support of groups such as the Ministry of Health, Rotary and National Taiwan University in making India a Hepatitis B free nation. The total Hepatitis B virus carrier pool in India is estimated at 25-40 million with a national prevalence rate of 2- 4%, primarily due to lack of awareness.

Chronic Hepatitis B usually results from either vertical transmission (mother to child) or due to horizontal transmission (social contact). National Liver Foundation and associates focus on targeted interventions for prevention of Hepatitis B among pregnant women, directly resulting in effective prevention of Hepatitis B from mother to the baby. The two year pilot project incorporates comprehensive strategy of targeted screening, immunization, medical care and interventions especially of the pregnant women and nationwide Information-Education-Communication campaign.

Dr Samir R Shah, honorary general secretary, National Liver Foundation, specialist in Hepatobiliary diseases and consultant gastroenterologist, said, "We, at National Liver Foundation strive to contribute towards making India a Hepatitis B free country. With lessons learnt from our project Pahal in the slums of Mumbai, we hope to take this movement nationwide. National Liver Foundation and its partner NGOs United Way Mumbai and AmeriCares sets on its 3-pronged Information-Education-Communication mission towards eradicating Hepatitis B from India."

Project 'Towards Hepatitis B Free Next Generation' is National Liver Foundation (NLF), AmeriCares and United Way Mumbai Helpline (UWMH) vision towards driving awareness about the disease which is more rampant and fatal than HIV. The maiden campaign activation in three slum communities in Mumbai will address the Western suburbs, Eastern suburbs and South Mumbai towards Hepatitis B testing in pregnant women and vaccination of new born. National Liver Foundation will launch Patient Support Groups, where patients can get together to support each other; while it launches its various state chapters all over the country to make this movement nationwide.