



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH

**UGANDA NATIONAL HEALTH  
LABORATORY SERVICES/CPHL**

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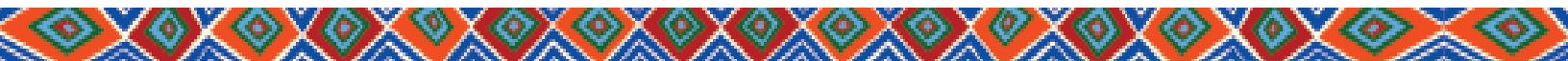


# UNHLS eNOTICE BOARD

*The Health Lab Monthly News Series*

**Featuring Month of:** JULY 2017

**Issue date:** Monday 14<sup>th</sup> August 2017; Vol .1, Issue 6



**Picture Narrative**

CPHL/UNHLS, School of Biomedical Laboratory Sciences – CHS Makerere University and Novik Hospital conducted free hepatitis B testing to 1,228 clients at the City Square Kampala. The massive free testing was part of the ongoing NOhep campaign strategy adopted by governments of 194 countries during the 69<sup>th</sup> WHO Assembly in Geneva to eliminate viral hepatitis by 2030.

With availability of effective vaccines and treatments for hepatitis B and a cure for hepatitis C, the elimination of viral hepatitis is achievable, but greater awareness and understanding of the disease and the risks is a must, as is access to cheaper diagnosis and treatment.

**Our vision**

Quality health laboratory services available and accessible to all people in Uganda

**Our Mission**

Provide quality, cost-effective and sustainable health laboratory services to support the delivery of the Uganda National Minimum Health Care Package at all levels.

**Our Mandate**

- To undertake and coordinate clinical and public health laboratory services needed to support the implementation of the Uganda National Minimum Health Care Package
- To provide for the purpose and functions of modern and high-technology reference laboratory services with international standards that will address the challenge of testing specimens for complex diagnostic and forensic purposes.

**FEATURED STORIES**

- UNHLS Coordinates World Hepatitis day, 28<sup>th</sup> July 2017
- Reviewing guidelines of Hub Sample transport system
- Building Capacity for the UNHLS staff from all Units



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
Center for Global Health



## Editorial Opinion

Dear readers, the issue for the month of July brings to your attention, the viral hepatitis which is one of the leading causes of death globally, accounting for 1.3 million deaths per year. Together, hepatitis B and C virus cause 80% of all liver cancer cases in the world.

Services coordinated by UNHLS are part of the prevention and treatment plan where Laboratory blood test confirmation of hepatitis diagnosis is essential because clinically it is impossible to differentiate hepatitis B from liver diseases caused by other agents. Tests are also needed to distinguish acute and chronic infections and to determine whether there is need for treatment or not. Acute infection is characterized by presence of Hepatitis B surface antigens (HBsAg) together with immunoglobulin M (IgM) antibody to the core antigen (HBcAg) and presence of envelope antigen (HBeAg) which is a marker of high levels of replication of the virus. Chronic infection is characterized by persistence of HBsAg for at least 6 months (with or without concurrent HBeAg). Persistence of HBsAg is the principal marker of risk for developing chronic liver disease and liver cancer (hepatocellular carcinoma) later in life.

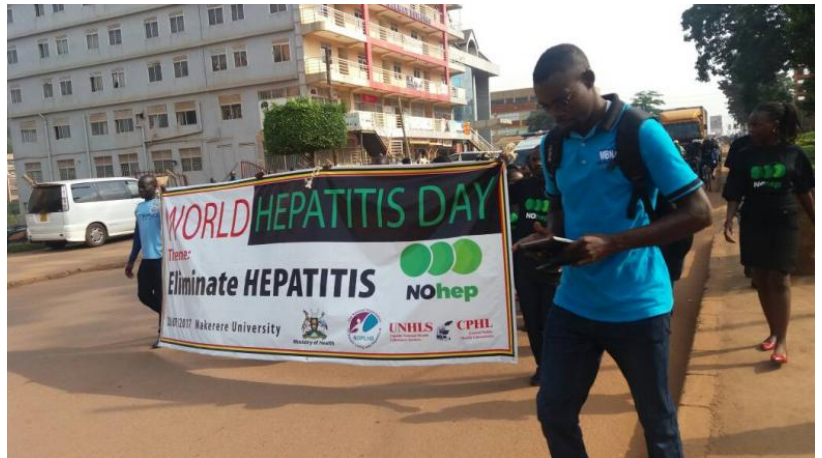
A vaccine against hepatitis B has been available since 1982 and is 95% effective in preventing infections and development of chronic disease or liver cancer due to hepatitis B virus. In Uganda, universal vaccination against hepatitis B virus was introduced in 2002 for all new born babies hence no need for vaccination of children born after 2002 since they were all immunized during routine immunization. Vaccination against hepatitis must be after testing so as to eliminate wastage of vaccine to positive people whose treatment might also be delayed by lack of diagnosis.

Kasuse Michael, MakSPH – CDC Fellow

## UNHLS COORDINATES WORLD HEPATITIS DAY, 28<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2017

World Hepatitis day commemorated every 28<sup>th</sup> July presents an ideal opportunity to join together and raise the profile of viral hepatitis among the public, the world's media and on the global health agenda. According to WHO website, Uganda is one of the countries that have established high level national committees, set national elimination targets and developed national plans to have dedicated funding. However, Uganda has not yet developed national hepatitis plans and has not provided universal access to treatment although MOH is providing free treatment in high burdened districts sites including; Kiruddu, Lira, Soroti and Arua.

On 28<sup>th</sup> July 2017, UNHLS took lead in marching and thereafter testing about 1.700 clients at Makerere University sports ground with support from institutions including; UPDF, Uganda Police, University Medical Centre (UMC) Victoria Hospital, Novik, Save your Liver Foundation Uganda, MBN Laboratories, AAR, Kimsy meds and Center for Private Health and social adjustment.



UNHLS Banner ahead of a NOhep march on Kampala Road

## Reviewing Guidelines of Hub Sample Transport system

UNHLS Top management and Implementing Partners (IPs) made an assessment of the sample transport system during a meeting at Golden Tulip Canaan Hotel on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2017. This was aimed at; comprehending the challenges of system; allocation of additional motorbikes from Global Fund, TASO and SURE; seeking commitment from IPs on related costs including recruitment of the second bike rider; and sharing of working draft guidelines among other issues. Decisions were made including; hubs getting full time second bike rider with a bike and facilitation; establishing an M&E system for the hubs and sample transport Network; and IPs renewed commitment in meeting the challenges of hubs and sample network among others.



IPs during the Hub Sample transport Assesment meeting

## Building Capacity for UNHLS staff from all units

Between 4<sup>th</sup> -7<sup>th</sup> July 2017 staff in the data and other units attained skills in advanced data analysis during a training at Jevine Hotel, Rubaga. Data unit handles information related to EID, sickle cell, viral load, TB and microbiology programs and very often required to derive meaning that has to support subsequent decision during operations of the programs.



UNHLS staff comprehending aspects of STATA, Advanced excel and Ms ACCESS computer programs

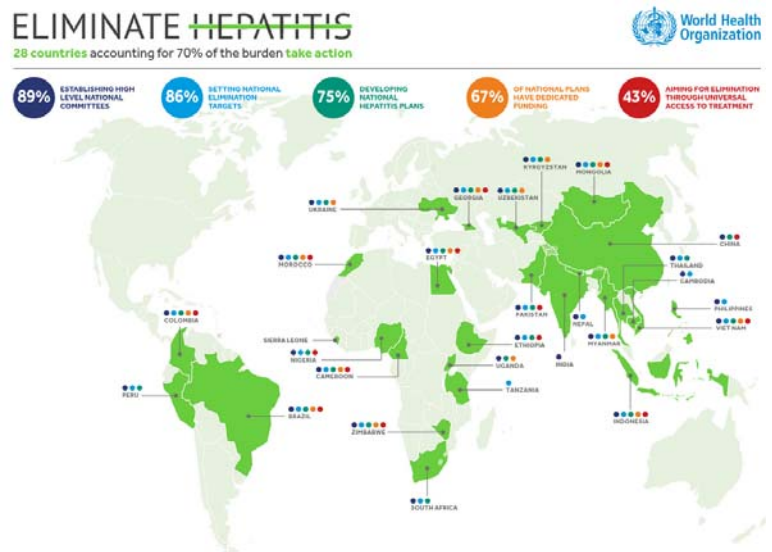
## Other activities

- Internal systems training for QA officers at Ridar Hotel between 3<sup>rd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017 that was aimed at building capacity and increasing the number of internal auditors – More updates by Bakunda Kamaranzi
- Viral load performance review meetings at UNHLS facility tent on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2017 to analyze the performance for the 5 divisions of Kampala – More updates by Dr. Zziwa Martin

## PICTORIAL SECTION



*Clients being tested for Hepatitis B at City Square Kampala during the Preparations for the World Hepatitis Day 2017*



*Uganda Performance for the Hepatitis Global Campaign 2017*

## On-going activities

- National-wide training of laboratory professionals in ethics, customer care, hepatitis diagnosis and management during Uganda Medical Laboratory Technology Association (UMLTA) Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Roll out training. More updates by Mushabe Brenda
- Conducting support supervision and assessment of district epidemic preparedness mostly along borders with DRC. UNHLS will train 60 district level officers from 20 high risk districts on meningococcal meningitis case based surveillance. There are preparations for cross border meetings between Uganda and South Sudan and between Uganda and Kenya – More updates by Atek Kagirita
- Monthly Viral Load meetings to discuss the progress of viral load program in accordance to targets – More updates by Dr. Miriam Murungi
- SPARS Training of laboratory managers on logistics management – More updates by Wilson Nyegenye.

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