

HEPATITIS

medicines are cheaper now.

TREAT

to save lives.



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Today is World Hepatitis Day.

In 2016, the Sixty-ninth World Health Assembly endorsed a resolution to eliminate hepatitis as a public health problem by 2030. Unfortunately, our response to viral hepatitis has stagnated in recent years. In many countries, testing for hepatitis B and C virus infection with a view to treatment has not been scaled up because tests and medicines are regarded as too expensive. But this year, we have new opportunities.

There is good news about the price of treatment. In May 2023, the Clinton Health Access Initiative and The Hepatitis Fund announced a new agreement by which low- and middle-income countries can get

hepatitis B medicines for just US\$ 2 per month and hepatitis C cure for US\$ 30.

There are also new possibilities for diagnosis. The COVID-19 pandemic has prompted a surge in PCR laboratory infrastructure which can be used to scale up diagnosis.

These are two excellent developments and I hope they pave the way to more success in our Region so that we can follow the lead of Egypt, a champion at both the regional and global levels.

Today, I urge all Member States to seize these opportunities and scale up testing and treatment for hepatitis B and C as an essential part of WHO's regional vision of Health for All by All.