



The Top 10 “Count-Ups” to Healthcare Excellence at Biomédica de Referencia (Mexico)

A major area of focus for the World Health Organization (WHO) is elimination of hepatitis C virus (HCV) as a public health threat by 2030. Globally, an estimated 71 million people have chronic HCV. However, only an estimated 19% of these cases are diagnosed (13.1 million), and even fewer are receiving the treatment they so desperately need (5 million). Accordingly, initiatives that focus on identification of unknown HCV infections have substantial value for public health and long-term outcomes following treatment and preventative care. Tackling such an important public health issue can be a herculean effort and often requires strategic partnerships across teams and organizations. Biomédica de Referencia has been a leader in this effort for over 13 years, partnering with the Mexican Foundation for Liver Health (FundHepa) to improve the identification and treatment of people with HCV. This was achieved through activation of comprehensive media campaigns to raise disease awareness, collaborations amongst partners to ensure access to complementary HCV population screening, all while also ensuring treatment strategies that link all positive patients to relevant education and care. Learn more about their collective effort in the below top 10 “count-up”, an homage to the measurable impact they are making to HCV elimination in Mexico:

1st CARE TEAM IN MEXICO TO RECEIVE A UNIVANTS OF HEALTHCARE EXCELLENCE AWARD

The UNIVANTS of Healthcare Excellence awards are a prestigious global honor for integrated clinical care teams who are achieving measurable success for patients, payors, clinicians and entire health systems. For their valued efforts toward HCV elimination, an integrated clinical care team received Recognition of Achievement for Healthcare Excellence in 2020. Despite hundreds of initiated applications across the globe each year, Biomédica de Referencia is the first site in Mexico to receive this esteemed honor.

221 PATIENTS WITH PREVIOUSLY UNDETECTED HCV WERE CONFIRMED POSITIVE FOR HCV INFECTION

Of the individuals who opted in for HCV screening, 367 were found to have detectable anti-HCV antibodies (0.5%) and 221 of those had active HCV infections (0.3%). Once active infections are identified, patients can be linked to care, thus reducing transmission and downstream complications.

3-FOLD REDUCTION IN DISEASE COST BURDEN DUE TO EARLY DETECTION AND INTERVENTION

The average cost for patients with late stage HCV is greater than 3 times the cost of treating HCV in the early stages.¹ Thus, any effort to identify and treat HCV early can substantially reduce overall disease burden.

4th LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH IN MEXICO NOW DECLINING

Mexico is disproportionately affected by liver disease, among causes of which is HCV. Liver disease is the 4th leading cause of death in Mexico versus 14th leading cause of death globally.^{2,3} As such, opportunities to identify and treat the underlying causes of liver disease are exponentially important in this population.

5 INNOVATIVE WOMEN LEADING COUNTRY-WIDE INITIATIVE

Clara Corona de Lau, *BS, CEO, and Clinical Director Biomédica de Referencia*, Dana Lau Corona, *MD, PhD Medical Researcher, Department of Gastroenterology*, Alicia Arana Grimaldo, *BBA, Chief of Clinical Operations, Biomédica de Referencia*, Maria Concepcion Gutierrez Ruiz, *PhD, President of the Scientific Committee FundHepa*, Evelin Najera Lopez, *BBA, Team Leader, Innovation and Clinical Data Biomédica de Referencia* are the innovative leaders behind this important public health initiative. Congratulations to these strong women for their leadership and outstanding efforts focused on improving public health through identification of unknown HCV infections.



Clara Corona de Lau



Dana Lau Corona



Alicia Arana Grimaldo



Maria Concepcion
Gutierrez Ruiz



Evelin Najera Lopez

6 ADDITIONAL CLINICAL LABORATORIES AND 29 ADDITIONAL COMPANIES ACROSS MEXICO NOW ENGAGED

To maximize participation and enable hassle free testing, HCV screening is available directly through the laboratory, as well as at facilitated collection centres made available at individuals' places of work. Thanks to early success at Biomédica de Referencia, their initiative has since expanded to include broader teams of laboratories and companies interested in HCV awareness and identification.

70,000 INDIVIDUALS IN MEXICO HAVE BECOME MORE AWARE OF THE COMPLICATIONS AND RISKS OF HCV

Among the significant barriers to improve outcomes is increasing disease awareness. Through comprehensive media strategies (print and online) Biomédica de Referencia and FundHepa were able to increase disease awareness thus far to more than 70,000 people. These exciting metrics grow year over year.

8-FOLD INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF PATIENTS SCREENED SINCE PROGRAM INITIATION

As a direct result of increased disease awareness, the program has seen an 8-fold increase in the number of patients screened in the 13th year relative to the first year of the campaign (1,179 in 2007 to 9,372 in 2019).

9 YEARS MAXIMUM TO HCV ELIMINATION 2030

A major area of focus for the World Health Organization (WHO) is the elimination of HCV as a public health threat by 2030. Through initiatives such as this, the WHO goal is in sight, with only 9 years or less to achieve HCV elimination.

10+ YEARS OF HEPATITIS LEADERSHIP

With over 10 years of leadership in public health initiatives dedicated to HCV elimination, Biomédica de Referencia is considered a healthcare excellence leader and is truly an altruistic team dedicated to improving the health of all Mexicans.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Strategic use of HCV antibody immunoassays, in combination with reflex testing by PCR for viral load, enables population-based screening for the identification of unknown HCV infections, which includes individuals who otherwise would not have been screened.
2. Media campaigns can increase disease awareness and play a major role in encouraging citizens to get tested.
3. Cross disciplinary involvement and strategic partners can substantially enhance education initiatives, follow-up, and treatment.

For more details on this best practice please visit [UNIVANTS – Biomédica de Referencia](#).

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