**Surveillance, epidemiology and prevention of Hepatitis B in Israel**

Results of the EUROHEP.NET feasibility survey

**OBJECTIVES and METHODS**

The EUROHEP.NET project is supported by the Quality of Life Programme of the 5th Framework of the European Community for Research. The project addresses passive surveillance of hepatitis A and B in the EU countries, associated with research and dissemination. The overall aim of the project is to support Europe-wide surveillance and prevention and to facilitate the progress of these countries towards enhanced control of hepatitis A and B.

EUROHEP.NET sent a feasibility survey to all participating countries to take stock of the country-specific surveillance and prevention activities for hepatitis A and B. The first achievement of this EU concerted action is to provide a standardized/comparative view on the different surveillance systems and prevention programmes for these infectious diseases.

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**PREVENTION by active immunisation**

- Flow chart of the surveillance system
- Ministry of Health weekly update of the reported cases

**CASE DEFINITION**

- A country-specific hepatitis B case definition is used.
- A hepatitis B case is defined as 'diagnosed by the reporting clinician, or lab confirmed.'

**COMMENTS**

- Surveillance is passive, mandatory and mostly laboratory based. Hepatitis B surveillance data are not only based on laboratory reports, but the diagnosis of HBV must be laboratory based. As any passive surveillance, this is not a complete nor 100% reliable system. However, validation with active surveillance demonstrates that the passive system is appropriate for trends.
- A country-specific case definition is used.
- Hepatitis B is considered an endemic disease. Some populations originating from endemic regions have high carrier rates. The degree of underreporting is unknown.
- A universal vaccination programme is in place and reimbursed for all newborns.

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**FOOTNOTES**

1. Sources for disease burden data are the Ministry of Health, Information Center, reported by code ICD9.

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