

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GILEAD SCIENCES AND NATIONAL FOUNDATION OF DIGESTIVE DISEASES SET OUT TO STRENGTHEN LEARNING, ACCESS TO LIVER HEALTH EDUCATION IN SINGAPORE

-- Gilead Sciences supports National Foundation of Digestive Diseases with grant funding to improve liver health education in Singapore as part of its Asia Pacific ALL4LIVER Grant --

-- The National Foundation of Digestive Diseases gets digital upgrade to enhance liver health awareness and education --

-- General apathy among Singaporeans towards liver health, particularly among those aged 25 and below based on the pan-regional Liver Health Index study --

Singapore, 19 April 2022 – In celebration of World Liver Day, Gilead Sciences and the National Foundation of Digestive Diseases (NFDD) today announced a new collaborative effort to enhance liver health education in Singapore. As part of the Gilead Asia Pacific [ALL4LIVER Grant](#) program, more than US\$1 million grant funding has been earmarked to support initiatives to enhance education about viral hepatitis led by community-based organisations across Asia Pacific, with a focus on chronic hepatitis B (HBV). NFDD is among the first batch of recipients of the ALL4LIVER Grant, and the only organisation from Singapore. Currently, HBV causes 60-70% of the total number of liver cancer cases in the country¹.

NFDD is a long established Singaporean non-profit organisation which serves to improve among the general public, knowledge and awareness of diseases affecting the digestive and liver system. With the awarded grant funding, NFDD is seeking to enhance liver disease awareness through a revamped website of the organisation and a series of digital outreach programmes. Specifically, the awareness campaigns will deliver regular updates on liver health information, a series of public forums and social media posts. Ultimately, it will help bring liver health, in particular viral hepatitis, to the forefront of public health and increase disease awareness outside of clinical settings.

“A recent study discovered that the Singaporean general public is relatively unaware of the consequences of delayed treatment of liver disease. Recognizing this as a wake up call, more can and should be done for supporting public education in liver diseases and health. For example, hepatitis B is one of the significant risk factors for liver cancer and cirrhosis, and regular monitoring is recommended. In addition, treatment is required in certain cases. However, many people remain unaware. With the support provided by the ALL4LIVER Grant, we are now able to step up education through both online and other channels to better engage the target populations, supporting them to seek the appropriate care,” said Associate Prof. George Goh Boon-Bee, Chairperson of the National Foundation of Digestive Diseases.

The Gilead Asia Pacific ALL4LIVER Grant was inspired by a [large-scale Asian liver health study](#) which identified critical knowledge gaps and attitudes of the general population towards liver health. An online survey conducted with 7,500 respondents across 11 countries/territories: Singapore, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam.

“The World Health Organisation aims to eliminate viral hepatitis by 2030. Through the Liver Index study, we have realised that progress towards the WHO goal, particularly in Asia, is potentially hindered by a lack

¹Hepatitis B: What You Need to Know, HealthXchange.sg. Available from: <https://www.healthxchange.sg/digestive-system/liver/hepatitis-b-need-know>

of public awareness. Initiatives like ALL4LIVER Grant certainly can boost local community groups across Asia to deliver innovative campaigns that enhance health literacy and create a world that is hepatitis free,” said Prof. Mei-Hsuan Lee, Institute of Clinical Medicine at National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University, Taiwan, and first author of the Asian Liver Index Study.

The ALL4LIVER Grant targets 11 countries/ territories across the Asia Pacific region – same as those from the Liver Index Study. Submissions focused on strengthening peer support, improving awareness, literacy, and innovation in hepatitis B.

Professor Tan Chee Kiat, Senior Consultant, Department of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Singapore General Hospital, a co-author of the Study and an advisor of All4LIVER Grant Committee said: “HBV is a silent killer. People who suffer from it may be asymptomatic for many years until they present with liver cirrhosis and/or liver cancer. Thus they missed opportunities to seek and receive the appropriate treatment as well as regular surveillance for liver cancer. Although HBV prevalence in Singapore is not high, it is evident that further public education is required to clear the misperceptions identified, promote prevention and early detection so that people can get the treatment they need.”

About Gilead Sciences

Gilead Sciences, Inc. is a biopharmaceutical company that has pursued and achieved breakthroughs in medicine for more than three decades, with the goal of creating a healthier world for all people. The company is committed to advancing innovative medicines to prevent and treat life-threatening diseases, including HIV, viral hepatitis and cancer. Gilead operates in more than 35 countries worldwide, with headquarters in Foster City, California.

About National Foundation of Digestive Diseases

The National Foundation For Digestive Diseases is a nonprofit organisation that serves to educate and inform the public on the function and diseases related to the digestive system (encompassing the liver, pancreas and gastrointestinal tract). Founded by the late Prof Seah Cheng Siang, our mission is to support research programmes on diseases, connect with like-minded national and international bodies and assist in formulating and recommending legislation for the care of people living with diseases of the digestive system.

About ALL4LIVER Grant

Gilead Sciences launched the ALL4LIVER Grant in 2021, a new biennial grant designed to support local communities and their fight against hepatitis B and step-up disease education across Asia Pacific. The ALL4LIVER Grant program aims to partner with local communities to work towards the WHO goal of eliminating viral hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030. For more information about the grant program and the grantees, please visit www.gileadall4liver.com.

About the Liver Index study

A study titled "Contextual and individual factors associated with knowledge, awareness and attitude on liver diseases: A large-scale Asian study" was published in Journal of Viral Hepatitis, using findings from a February 2020 survey conducted in Asia by Kantar Health, funded by Gilead Sciences. The online survey assessed knowledge, awareness and attitudes towards liver health and disease among 7,500 respondents across 11 countries/territories in Asia: Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam. The purpose of the survey was to identify the knowledge gaps and attitudes towards liver health and liver diseases as well as evaluate any associated individual-level and macro-level factors based on contextual analysis. Its key results reaffirmed the need to formulate policies to further improve the knowledge, awareness and attitudes of the general public towards liver diseases.



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