10 years left to eliminate viral hepatitis
- what now, what next, for uptake in hepatitis C treatment in low- and middle-income countries?

Globally, an estimated 71 million people have chronic hepatitis C infection, with an important proportion developing cirrhosis or liver cancer. Direct-acting antiviral (DAA) medicines can cure more than 95% of patients. Still, access to diagnostics and treatments is low, especially in low- and middle-income countries, where most people in need of treatment live. The World Health Organization (WHO) Global Hepatitis Report published in January 2021 shows that in 2017, just 19% of people living with the hepatitis C virus (HCV) knew of their diagnosis, which represents around 13 million people globally. Access to DAA treatment lags behind.

The last eight years have brought an arsenal of tools in the fight against HCV. These include simplified diagnostics and quality DAA medicines with high cure rates, shorter treatment durations with fewer side-effects, simplified delivery and much lower prices than previous generation medicines. These tools have revolutionised the approaches to treatment of HCV and provided an unprecedented opportunity for widespread scale-up. This session focuses on access to treatment and how to make best use of the tools available in national hepatitis C programs.