



Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)
LEGAL AID BOARD

Georgia - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on Tuesday 2 June 2015

Information on Hepatitis C including: available of medical treatment/public health care; treatment (societal) of sufferers

A report issued in February 2013 by the *Institute for War and Peace Reporting* states that:

“...Georgia's health service is struggling to cope with high rates of hepatitis C, with one in every 14 people in the country infected...Just one in ten Georgians with hepatitis C have received treatment as the drugs are so expensive. Around 1,000 are on the waiting list for liver transplant, commonly required in the most advanced stage” (Institute for War and Peace Reporting (9 February 2013) *Hepatitis Unchecked in Georgia*).

In April 2015 an item listed by *Rustavi-2 TV* states that:

“Georgian Health Minister Davit Sergeenko has launched a programme of free treatment of Hepatitis C” (Rustavi-2 TV (21 April 2015) *Programme summary of Georgian Rustavi-2 TV "Kurier" news 1700 gmt 21 Apr 15*).

In April 2015 a report issued by the *Black Sea Press* states:

“The medicaments for Hepatitis C treatment will be absolutely free of charge, Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili declared at a presentation of a new Hepatitis treatment program, InterPressNews agency reports. According to Irakli Gharibashvili, treatment of Hepatitis C was unavailable for most of Georgian citizens, but the reality will change in the nearest future” (Black Sea Press (22 April 2015) *Medicament for Hepatitis C Treatment to be Free of Charge*).

In April 2015 an article published by *Reuters* notes:

“Gilead Sciences is seeking to convince governments and multilateral agencies worldwide that hepatitis C can be eliminated with a demonstration project in Georgia offering free drugs to all those who need them. The unprecedented program will make the Caucasian country a testbed for uprooting the liver-destroying disease, using Gilead's highly effective but costly pill Sovaldi, plus its newer product Harvoni once approved. Georgia has the world's third highest prevalence of hepatitis C, after Egypt and Mongolia, with nearly 7 percent of adults carrying the virus. It also has a wide range of viral variations and different types of patients” (Reuters (22 April 2015) *Gilead uses Georgia as free-drug testbed for hepatitis C elimination*).

Human Rights Georgia in April 2015 points out that:

“Last week, new program of public healthcare was launched in Georgia. Before that, Government of Georgia declared 2015 as the year to fight against C Hepatitis. 200 000 people with Hepatitis C in Georgia (6.7% of Georgian population) are looking forward to the program; it aims to provide patients with medicines, diagnostic and other necessary services with high standards. Specialists clarify that expensive

medicines of new generation, which will arrive in Georgia from USA in a few days, give high guarantee to heal Hepatitis C and do not have side effects. Thousands people are looking forward to the medicines arrival in Georgia. Moreover, the medical treatment in the frame of the program will be free. However, it is questionable how available the program will be for all infected patients, who will have privileges and when it will cover full contingent of patients” (Human Rights Georgia (28 April 2015) *New Program for Hepatitis C Treatment Launched in Georgia*).

No further information on this issue could be found among sources available to the RDC.

References

Black Sea Press (22 April 2015) *Medicament for Hepatitis C Treatment to be Free of Charge*

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

Sources Consulted

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Electronic Immigration Network
European Country of Origin Information Network
Freedom House
Google
Human Rights Watch
Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada
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