

Summary Correlation Hepatitis C Initiative

**EC DG JUST Drug Information and
Prevention Programme
2013 -2014**

**Coordinator: Foundation De Regenboog
Group/Correlation Network**



Partner

Regenboog Groep (FRG), the Netherlands
Centre for Interdisciplinary Addiction Research (CIAR) of the Hamburg University, Germany
Institute of Public Health, University of Porto (ISPUP), Portugal
National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), Finland
Carousel Association, Romania
Swedish Drug Users Union (SDUU), Sweden
Copenhagen HIV Programme (CHIP) University of Copenhagen (UCPH), Denmark
Piaget Agency for Development (APDES), Portugal
International Network of People who Use Drugs (INPUD), United Kingdom

Associated Partner

A-Clinic Foundation, Finland
National Antidrug Agency (NAA), Romania
Aids Hilfe Frankfurt e.V. Germany
Action Plus, Albania
University of Applied Sciences Frankfurt (FH FEM), Germany
Fixpunkt, Germany
Charles University in Prague, First Faculty of Medicine, Department of Addictology (CUNI), Czech Republic
AIDS Foundation EAST–West (AFEW), the Netherlands
European Aids Treatment Group (EATG), Belgium
Eurasian Harm Reduction Network (EHRN), Lithuania
German Aids Organisation (DAH), Germany
Public Health Agency of Catalonia, Government of Catalonia (ASPC), Spain
Harm Reduction International (HRI), United Kingdom
Isle of Arran, Italy
ARUD, Switzerland
University Medical Centre Ljubljana, Clinic for Infectious Diseases and Febrile Illnesses, Slovenia
Scottish Drugs Forum (SDF), United Kingdom
European Lever Patient Organisation (ELPA), Belgium
Doctors of the World, France

additional partner can join on request
EMCDDA/ECDC/WHO are invited as observer

Summary project outline:

Viral hepatitis affects more than half a billion people worldwide and is a major public health problem in Europe, where it disproportionately affects injecting drug users. On average, 60% of injecting drug users (IDUs) are estimated to have hepatitis C, and in several countries the vast majority, over 90% of people who inject drugs (PWID), are believed to be living with hepatitis C.

The current situation regarding viral hepatitis and drug use indicates a clear need for action on various levels:

- ✓ Need for action on the practical level: Evidence shows, that testing for HCV and referral to HCV treatment are - among others - key interventions for the prevention of hepatitis. There is a need to improve a pragmatic prevention approach in services frequented by active drug users and to analyse barriers and obstacles to treatment uptake.
- ✓ Need to review and summarise current evidence and knowledge: The literature on HCV issues, including epidemiology, diagnosis, treatment, prevention programmes, screening programmes and societal attitudes varies considerably and is not always easily accessible for stakeholders in the field.
- ✓ Need for peer involvement and peer training: Peer involvement at an early stage has the potential to prevent new infections, promote testing for those who have been exposed to risks, and support and inform people for whom treatment is an option. Capacity building and training is a crucial pre-requisite for effective peer involvement activities.
- ✓ Need for political leadership: Although the great majority of governments in Europe is aware of the alarming data in regard to hepatitis C, policy responses to the epidemic and to the needs for interventions in the field of prevention, diagnosis, care and treatment, are insufficient.

The project will address the priority 'Review opportunities for developing and implementing (innovative) interventions, including training activities, to prevent hepatitis C in drug users'.

Overall aims:

- ✓ to improve the knowledge regarding hepatitis C policies and practice;
- ✓ to improve the capacities of target group representatives and professionals in the field of HCV prevention, counselling, testing and treatment, specifically targeting drug users;
- ✓ to influence HCV policies at the national and European level.

Specific objectives;

- ✓ to assess obstacles and barriers to the implementation of effective strategies in the field of HCV prevention, counselling, testing and treatment;
- ✓ to compile up-to-date information regarding theory and practice in the field of HCV and drug use and to identify emerging issues
- ✓ to organise peer-to-peer training and capacity building among injecting drug users in Europe, targeting HCV prevention, counselling, testing and treatment;
- ✓ to influence policies and advocate for the development and implementation of evidence-based HCV strategies at the European and national levels;

Methods:

The project will focus on three main areas: research, practice and policy.

The following methods have been selected to cover these areas and to achieve the objectives of the project:

- ✓ intervention analysis
- ✓ literature review
- ✓ training
- ✓ advocacy
- ✓ multidisciplinary cooperation

Results:

→ Inventory of effective interventions: Documentation of factors of success and failure, including recommendations,

→ Literature review: up-to-date literature, research reports and project documentations will be analysed and reviewed,
 → A peer-to-peer training course for drug users,
 → Policy and advocacy activities, committed to better access to high quality and effective HCV prevention, counselling, treatment and care,
 The project will organise 3 expert meetings, a peer to peer training seminar, four national policy dialogue meetings and an international policy seminar.
 A web-based resource centre will be set up, including all project outcomes and results.

workstream	coordinator	involved partner
<p>2 – inventory</p> <p>develop a tool to monitor current procedures for hepatitis C-related counselling, testing and treatment referral in drug services</p> <p>Implementation in Portugal, Finland, Germany and Romania</p>	<p>CIAR, Heike Zurhold</p>	<p>Institute of Public Health, University of Porto (ISPUP), Portugal</p> <p>National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), Finland</p> <p>Carousel Association, Romania</p> <p>A-Clinic Foundation, Finland</p> <p>National Antidrug Agency (NAA), Romania</p> <p>Aids Hilfe Frankfurt e.V. Germany</p>
<p>3 – literature review</p> <p>provide an expert overview over the latest data, theory and evidence regarding viral hepatitis and drug use in general, and in Europe in particular.</p>	<p>CHIP, Jeff Lazarus</p>	<p>University of Applied Sciences Frankfurt (FH FEM),</p> <p>Institute of Public Health, University of Porto (ISPUP), Portugal</p> <p>National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), Finland</p> <p>ARUD, Switzerland</p> <p>University Medical Centre Ljubljana, Clinic for Infectious Diseases and Febrile Illnesses, Slovenia</p> <p>Fixpunkt, Germany</p> <p>Scottish Drugs Forum (SDF), United Kingdom</p> <p>Public Health Agency of Catalonia, Government of Catalonia (ASPC), Spain</p>
<p>4 – training</p> <p>The training will include a training of trainers' module, designed to put peer education theory into practice. Trainees will learn to identify the training tools and skills required to deliver effective training</p>	<p>SDUU, Berne Stralenkrantz</p>	<p>SDDU, Louise Persson</p> <p>INPUD, Eliot Albers</p> <p>trainer Danny Morris, trainer Neil Hunt</p> <p>Correlation, John Peter Kools</p>

<p>programmes around HCV prevention, treatment and care for PWID.</p> <p>The training will be implemented and evaluated at a 5-day European training seminar</p>		
<p>5 – policy & advocacy</p> <p>Mapping, analysing and comparing existing national and European hepatitis C action plans, strategies, recommendations and guidelines</p> <p>Development and implementation of a European and four national advocacy strategies</p> <p>Setting up a sustainable 'Hepatitis C and drug use' platform</p> <p>Preparations final conference</p>	<p>APDES, Jose Queiroz</p>	<p>Action Plus, Albania</p> <p>Charles University in Prague, First Faculty of Medicine, Department of Addictology (CUNI), Czech Republic</p> <p>AIDS Foundation EAST–West (AFEW), the Netherlands</p> <p>European Aids Treatment Group (EATG), Belgium</p> <p>Fixpunkt, Germany</p> <p>Eurasian Harm Reduction Network (EHRN), Lithuania</p> <p>German Aids Organisation (DAH), Germany</p> <p>Public Health Agency of Catalonia, Government of Catalonia (ASPC), Spain</p> <p>Harm Reduction International (HRI), United Kingdom</p> <p>Isle of Arran, Italy</p> <p>Scottish Drugs Forum (SDF), United Kingdom</p> <p>European Lever Patient Organisation (ELPA), Belgium</p> <p>Doctors of the World , France</p>

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