2nd Meeting on detecting and responding to outbreaks of HIV among PWID

Update on country situation: Bulgaria

Lisbon, 12th October 2012

Varleva T.¹, Yakimova Ts. ¹, Bogdanova V.², Vassilev M.²
1. Ministry of Health; 2. National Centre for Addictions
Epidemiological update

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of newly diagnosed HIV cases in total</th>
<th>Total reported Jan to Sept 2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of newly diagnosed HIV cases in people who inject drugs (PWID)</td>
<td>33 (27%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data source: Ministry of Health, 2012

Newly diagnosed HIV cases by transmission category, Bulgaria, 2002 - 30 September 2012

New HIV cases by gender, Bulgaria, Jan-Sept 2012

New HIV cases by age groups, Bulgaria, Jan-Sept 2012
Epidemiological update
HIV and HCV prevalence trends among PWID – IBBS results

HIV prevalence among PWID, Bulgaria, IBBS results, 2004-2009

HCV prevalence among PWID, Bulgaria, IBBS results, 2004-2009

Data source: Program “Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS”, financed by GFATM
### Epidemiological update

HIV and HCV prevalence trends among PWID - diagnostic testing

#### Trends in HIV prevalence among PWID in Sofia*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sofia</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>overall</td>
<td>2.15%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in young PWID (&lt;25)</td>
<td>3.10%</td>
<td>6.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in new PWID (inj.&lt;2 yrs)</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gender</td>
<td>M: 53.84%; F: 46.15%</td>
<td>M: 65.62%; F: 34.38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Trends in HCV prevalence among PWID in Sofia*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sofia</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>overall</td>
<td></td>
<td>67.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in young PWID (&lt;25)</td>
<td>65.72%</td>
<td>52.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in new PWID (inj.&lt;2 yrs)</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gender</td>
<td></td>
<td>M: 67.49%; F: 32.51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data source: National Centre for Addictions, 2012*
Behavioural surveillance (June-August 2012)

Drug use patterns
- 81.2% used heroin last year; 67.7% used heroin last 4 weeks;
- 42.4% used amphetamines last year; 28.7% used amphetamines last 4 weeks;
- 10.8% used cocaine last year; 4.3% used cocaine last 4 weeks;
- 3.8% used other stimulants last year; 1.1% used other stimulants last 4 weeks;
- 67.1% used methadone last year; 59.3% used methadone last 4 weeks;

Risk behaviour
- 44% daily injected last 4 weeks; 48.2% injected with a used needle/syringe last 4 weeks; 48.2% used other paraphernalia last 4 weeks; 0.1% shared with 4 partners the last used needle/syringe last time;
- 9% sex work last 4 weeks; 44.6% used condom last intercourse, no data number of partners

Sociodemographic risk factors
- age: 29.44 years (mean); 30 years (mode); gender: 77.9% M, 22.1% F
- education: 46.4% secondary education; 36.5% primary education; 9.8% without primary education;
- 4% homelessness; 1.6% born outside country; no data ever in prison
## PWID population size estimates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population size estimates in:</th>
<th>PWID (Capital)</th>
<th>PWID (National)</th>
<th>PDUs</th>
<th>POUs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number:</td>
<td>≈ 11 000</td>
<td>≈ 19 000</td>
<td>≈ 32 000</td>
<td>≈ 27 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year:</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source:</td>
<td>NFP - TDI (CR)</td>
<td>NFP - TDI (CR)</td>
<td>NFP - CR</td>
<td>NFP - CR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NFP - TDI (CR), NFP - CR

Year: 2011, 2010

Number: ≈ 11 000, ≈ 19 000, ≈ 32 000, ≈ 27 000
Legal basis related to drug use programmes

Drugs and Precursors Control Act of 2009
National Strategy to Combat Drug Addictions (2009-2013)
Ministry of Health Ordinance № 24 of 31 October 2000 on the
Terms and Conditions for Operating Drug
Substitution and Maintenance Programmes (currently revised)
Ministry of Health Ordinance №7 of 7 September 2011 on the
Terms and Conditions for Implementing Drug Use Harm
Reduction Programmes

BUT 2004 amendment of the Penal Code criminalizing the
possession of ‘single dose’ (currently inactive)
Legal basis related to HIV prevention and control programmes

National Programme for Prevention and Control of HIV and STIs (2008-2015)

Ministry of Health Ordinance №47 of 29 Dec 2009 on the Terms and Conditions for HIV Testing, Case Registration and Reporting

Ministry of Health and Ministry of Justice Joint Order regulating the provision of HIV Testing and Counselling in Prisons (biannual since 2007)
Drug Treatment Programs as entry point for harm reduction and HIV prevention

Drug dependence treatment (state and municipal funding):
12 state psychiatric hospitals;
12 regional psychiatric centres,
14 psychiatric wards of multi-profiled hospitals
5 psychiatric clinics at university hospitals

30 Opioid Substitution Programs in 2012 (32 in 2011)
12 Rehabilitation programs
Ministry of Health
Program “Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS in Bulgaria”, funded by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria

Mapping HIV prevention and surveillance activities among IDUs in Bulgaria, 2004-2012

NGO – harm reduction program, outreach, needle/syringe exchange, condoms, counselling, peer-driven activities

Daily centres – prevention case management, IDUs living with HIV

Mobile medical unit – HIV, HBV, HCV, Syphilis testing

Integrated Biological and Behavioural Surveys
Interventions - Coverage

- % of estimated POUs in opioid substitution treatment - ~20% (Jul12, NCA)
- % of new HIV cases enrolled in HIV care – 59% (2011)
- Number of syringes distributed per estimated PWID per year – 34-36 per estimated PWID; 84 per PWID reached with HIV prevention program

IBBS among people who inject drugs, Bulgaria, 2004-2009
## Self-assessing preventive intervention situation (I)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Intervention ECDC / EMCDDA</th>
<th>Implemented? (Yes/No/partly)</th>
<th>STRENGTH</th>
<th>WEAKNESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **INJECTION EQUIPMENT**  
Provision and legal access | Partly | Free-of-charge and in a package of HIV prevention services, provided by NGO networks | Not allowed in prisons; Need of sustainable financing after the Global Fund grant ending 2014; pharmacies |
| **VACCINATION**  
HBV, HAV, tetanus etc. | Partly | HBV vaccination of newborns since 1992 | |
| **DRUG DEPENDENCE TREATMENT – OST etc** | Partly | Quality assurance; programs providing psychological support | No programs in prisons; low coverage of rehabilitation and social reintegration programs |
| **TESTING**  
HIV, HCV, HBV, TB etc | Yes | Free-of-charge and anonymous; efficient in case finding; high coverage in prisons | Need of sustainable financing of prevention and care services after the Global Fund grant |
**Self-assessing preventive intervention situation (II)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Intervention</th>
<th>Implemented? (Yes/No/partly)</th>
<th>STRENGTH</th>
<th>WEAKNESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INFECTIOUS DISEASE TREATMENT</td>
<td>Partly</td>
<td>Free-of-charge HIV and TB treatment; case management provided by NGOs</td>
<td>Legal obstacles for HCV treatment of PWID in OST; costly and low coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV, HCV, HBV, TB etc</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEALTH PROMOTION</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Standardized; provided by a network of NGOs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>safer injecting behaviour; sexual health etc</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TARGETED DELIVERY OF SERVICES</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>National HIV/STI Program – principles of strategic planning and program adaptation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>organised and delivered according to user needs and local conditions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMPLEMENTED IN COMBINATION?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Harm reduction as a nationwide policy since 2004 with GF funds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Prevention funding

How did prevention funding change between 2009 to 2012?
1) for HIV: Increase V No Change □ Decrease □
2) for PWID: Increase V No Change □ Decrease □

Do you anticipate reductions in funding for HIV prevention among PWID in the coming 2 years?
- National Anti-Drug Strategy – state funding increase for HR programmes, for example, overdose prevention
- National HIV/STI Program – state funding increase for HIV testing and ARV treatment; need of sustainability of HIV prevention funding after the Global Funded Program “Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS”, which is decreasing and active involvement of municipalities
Drug markets

Are there any changes in heroin availability in your country?

Increase □  No Change □  Decrease √

Are there any evidence of “new” drugs entering the market, especially methamphetamines? (based on seizure data and/or qualitative data)

• Methamphetamines and LSD, which have not been in the past among the traditional substances in the Bulgarian drug market;
• New substances from the category of “legal highs”, mainly synthetic cannabinoids and cathinones, as well as phenethylamines

Is there an observed change in injecting stimulant use?

Increase √  No Change □  Decrease □
Main challenges

Surveillance and monitoring:
- Sustainability of HIV surveillance and monitoring activities after the Global Fund-funded program - databases; increased collaboration between drug and drug addictions and HIV monitoring;

Harm reduction:
- Ordinance №7 entered in force last year (7 September 2011) along with Methodological Guidelines (January 2012)

Drug treatment for PWID:
- Established new Medical Standard in Psychiatry that regulates treatment for children between 15 and 18 years of age
- Buprenorphine treatment has started within the substitution programs

Collaboration between public health and drug authorities:
Thank you!