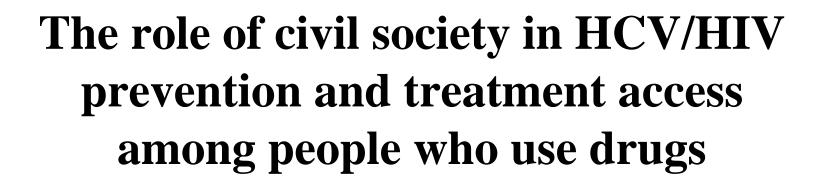


Improving health and protecting human rights for individuals, communities, and society



Presenter:

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Hepatitis C

- HCV epidemics grows faster among people who use drugs than HIV-infection
- HCV increases death rates among people living with HIV
- Not enough attention and funding from international and national stakeholders

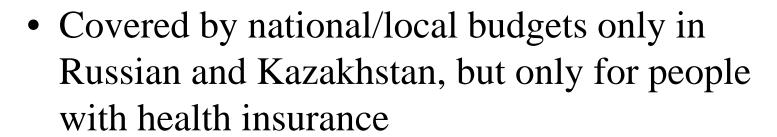
Community perspective on disease prevention

- Accurate information on how to avoid or decrease the risk of getting the disease
- Ability to apply this knowledge in real life
- Access to testing and high-quality affordable treatment
- Protection from discrimination

Hepatitis C information and harm reduction

- Incorrect information in educational pamphlets (sexual transmission, drug use and disease progression, etc.)
- Filters, water and cookers are rarely part of standardized harm reduction package
- <3% access to OST in EECA; majority of OST clients already have HCV infection or HIV/HCV co-infection

HCV testing

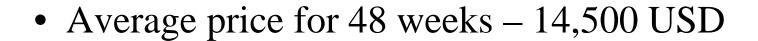


- Sporadic HCV testing through the Global Fund and other donor programs
- No recommendations on counseling
- Georgia: due to a civil society action free antibody tests for citizens of Tbilisi

HIV/HCV treatment

- WHO-Euro recommends *Pegylated Interferon* and *Ribavirin* for EECA
- National funding for treatment only in Russia and Kazakhstan
- **Russia**: Court case on free-of-charge HCV diagnostics for PLHIV
- **Georgia**: ECHR decision on hepatitis C treatment in prison settings

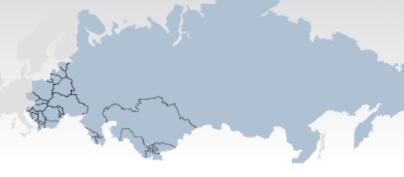
Treatment price



• Georgia – around 7,000 USD (for 550 patients from the Global Fund program)

 Price reduction dialogue is possible; pilot programs are a good argument for price reduction

Recommendations



- Review standard harm reduction packages and adapt it to HCV needs: include filters, water and containers and HCV testing
- Invest into harm reduction staff and peer counselors training on HCV prevention and treatment
- Start pilot treatment programs and negotiate PEG-INF price with pharma to treat more patients with co-infection