PrEP Experience in Ukraine

Andrey Klepikov, Executive director, Alliance for Public Health

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Prerequisites and epidemiology

• According to the latest IBBS in Ukraine (2017-18), the prevalence of HIV among MSM is an average of 7.5%.
• In about half of the cases MSM do not use condoms during anal sex.
• The number of MSM who use chemical substances and practice chemsex has increased.
• MSM in Ukraine remain the only group that is projected to show a steady increase in new HIV cases.
• Due to the high level of stigma and discrimination, MSM still avoid visiting medical institutions for medical services.

Pilot PrEP project funding:

• Pilot Project on PrEP implementation for 100 MSM/TG in Kyiv – 100 year courses on daily use base (funded by CDC, PEPFAR)
• Start: November 2017. Partners: NGO «ALLIANCE. GLOBAL», Kyiv AIDS Center, funded by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention through ICF «Alliance for Public Health».

National Program funding:

• 2700 Year PrEP courses (funded by PEPFAR and Global Fund).
• Social support for PrEP – funded by Global Fund.
• Financing of PrEP from the state budget - is not planned yet.
Discussion around PrEP introduction
- Initiated by Alliance for Public Health with CDC

PrEP in PEPFAR Country Operation Plan
- 2nd PrEP Regional Forum with International Participation: ECDC, WHO, AIDS Center;
- PrEP Pilot project planning

Launch of Pilot Project for 100 MSM/TGW in Kyiv
- PrEP among MSM included in the City’s AIDS program as a Fast Track strategy;
- Stakeholders meeting on PrEP implementation;
- 3 Trainings for NGOs and healthcare providers (knowledge exchange with successful French PrEP intervention);
- Community counseling and small on-line advertising campaign.

On-going patient enrollment and PrEP Provision
- Launch of promo video;
- Optimization of client’s route;
- Optimization of PrEP provision schedule;
- 90% retention rate.

National PrEP Program Scale-up
- 2700 PrEP courses (TDF/FTC generic) procured and delivered to regions;
- Implementing partners selected – 25 NGO (Global Fund funding);
- PrEP provision started in April 2019;
- 80 of 100 Pilot Project clients referred to National Program.
Pilot Project brief summary

- **Drug:** TDF/FTC generic (India) 100 courses (12 months of daily use)
- **Participants:** A total of 100 HIV-negative MSM/TG who are at high risk of acquiring HIV are invited to participate in the Project
- **Partners:** Kyiv City AIDS Center and NGO “ALLIANCE. GLOBAL” (community support)
- **Personnel:** 1 medical coordinator and 3 doctors, 4 laboratory specialists, 1 NGO coordinator and 5 social workers.
- **First course of PrEP:** 26 January 2018.
- **Follow-up visits to AIDS Center** on 1-3-6-9-12 months.
- **Medical monitoring** includes testing for HIV, HBV, HCV, creatinine, and STIs.
- **Continuous social support** includes monthly visits to NGO PrEP consultants for counseling on adherence, sexual risk behavior assessment, etc.
Cascade of PrEP Readiness among MSM in Ukraine

Data source: IBBS among MSM 2017-18.

* Received negative HIV test result within IBBS.

** Eligible according to risk behavior criteria: have unsafe sex and/or have sex with more than one partner for the last 30 days, or/and have HIV-positive sex partner.

*** It was indicated in the framework of the survey, that they want to take PrEP and agree for all conditions of its prescription and monitoring of use.

**** Indicator of PrEP Readiness: the proportion of MSM with HIV-negative, eligible according to risk behavior criteria and demonstrated willingness to use PrEP.
Pilot Project: Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) for MSM/TG in Kyiv

Criteria for participation

Non-medical screening

• Potential user is MSM or transgender woman.
• HIV negative (confirmed at enrolment by assisted rapid testing).
• Born male and aged 18 years or more.
• Able and willing to provide written informed consent.
• Had anal sex without a condom with men (including chemsex).
• Have been diagnosed with an STI during last 6 months.
• Have received post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP).

Medical screening

• Medical counselling
• HIV (ag/ab) test by PCR
• Creatinine test
• STIs tests: Neisseria gonorrhea, Chlamydia trachomatis - ano-rectal and pharyngeal swabs + urine, Syphilis, HBV and HCV.
Follow-up visits performed by social worker every month:

- Assessment of sexual risk behavior and brief risk-reduction counselling, issue of condoms and lubricants
- Adherence counselling
- Check up for signs of acute HIV infection
- Check up for side-effects
- Data collection on adherence (how many pills missed in the period)
- Data collection on condom use and incidence of unprotected sex (number of sex partners, number of partners with HIV+ or unknown status, preventive strategies used, self-reported condom use)
- Schedule next follow up appointment in approximately 25 days, but no later than 30 days after the current visit.
Pilot Project implementation scheme:

1. Info campaign
   Recruiting process

2. Development of client base

3. First meeting with social worker:
   Counselling
   Document workflow
   Screening

4. Medical examination in AIDS Center.
   Medical provider counselling
   PrEP prescription and provision

5. Monthly counselling with social worker and quarterly with medical provider
   Quarterly lab tests and medical examinations

6. Visit on month 12 (last visit before referral to National Program)

7. Project results analysis

8. Ensuring the sustainability of services

Continuous social support.

Cost and Needs Analysis
# Laboratory testing schedule

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According to the vaccination calendar
Pilot Project: Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) for MSM/TG in Kyiv

Pilot Project preliminary data analysis:

• 140 potential participants were screened by NGO.
• 124 participants were screened by AIDS Center doctor and laboratory tested and were eligible for PrEP.
• 24 participants discontinued from PrEP.

  Reasons that caused “losses” during PrEP intake
  - 3 change of sexual behavior model
  - 4 lost to follow-up
  - 8 decided to stop taking PrEP
  - 7 moved abroad
  - 1 was diagnosed with HIV (“window” period).
  - 1 broke his leg

✓ 100 participants take daily PrEP
✓ 90% continuation on PrEP (number of people who continued on PrEP for three consecutive months after having initiated PrEP in the last 12 months divided by number of people who initiated oral PrEP in the last 12 months).

https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/279834/WHO-CDS-HIV-18.10-eng.pdf?ua=1
Pilot Project: Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) for MSM/TG in Kyiv

Pilot Project good practice:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DMAZB3O1fbY

• Launch of promo video.
• Development of optimized client’s route during medical and lab visits.
• Optimization of PrEP provision schedule - from monthly to quarterly visits to medical provider.
• Ensure flexible replacement of medical provider depending on client’s needs.
MSM who currently take daily PrEP, by age:

- 19 – 3%
- 20-24 – 21%
- 25-29 – 27%
- 30-34 – 22%
- 35-39 – 18%
- 40-49 – 8%
- 51 – 1%
Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) scale-up

Useful links and sources for PrEP implementation

- [https://www.who.int/hiv/topics/prep/en/](https://www.who.int/hiv/topics/prep/en/)
- [https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/prep.html](https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/prep.html)
- [https://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z0530-17](https://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z0530-17)
National PrEP program current status

• PrEP drugs (TDF/FTC generic) have been delivered to regions.
• Implementing partners selected – 25 NGO (Global Fund funding).
• 3 trainings for social workers conducted. It is planned to hold trainings for medical providers.
• Official MOH recommendations have been issued.
• Local protocols are under development.
• PrEP provision using local protocols has started in several regions already.

http://prep.com.ua/
Sharing best practice with Belarus multidisciplinary team:

• Study visits to Center for Public Health (MOH) Community center, AIDS Center, Alliance for Public Health conducted.

• Information on Ukraine experience on PrEP implementation presented.

• Questions – answers session conducted (FAQ: barriers, Protocol and regulations, project scheme)
Experience of information campaign with involvement of celebrities
HIV self-testing with Monro:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VqkHKW4jihQ
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=obQ73hb7QU8
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VqkHKW4jihQ
Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) best practice

Publication on WHO web-site – Ukraine experience direct speech

Planned Operational research on PrEP in Regional grant in 2019 - 2020

• Belarus
• Bosnia and Herzegovina
• Moldova
• North Macedonia
Conclusions and recommendations for the successful PrEP implementation:

• Adoption of the regulatory framework for the implementation of PrEP. Develop a clear mechanism for implementing PrEP program at the local level.
• Demand creation: development and launch National information campaign to promote PrEP among MSM and other key groups.
• Inclusion of PrEP into the package of HIV prevention services.
• The most effective implementation of PrEP will be possible using the Safe Space principle and community-based organizations, providing as many services as possible in one place in order to maximize client retention in the program.
THANK YOU!

Acknowledgments:
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