



Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being

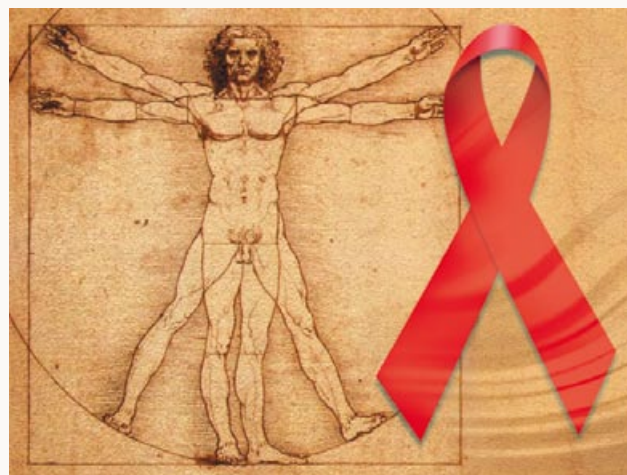
About the NDPHS Expert Group on HIV/AIDS

www.ndphs.org/?hiv-aids_eg

Fact sheet 4/2008

Why we need this expert group

The Partners of the Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being (NDPHS) have recognised that health systems in our region need to be strengthened with a particular emphasis on HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment. The situation of the HIV-epidemic and the extent and implementation of policies towards HIV/AIDS vary among the NDPHS members. Consequently, there is a continuous need to share experiences and expertise. The North-East Europe region is one of the worst hit on our continent. HIV prevalence is close to 1% in adult populations in Estonia, and in some regions of North West Russia and Latvia. The worst local HIV-infection outbreaks were seen 5-7 years ago, but new cases are still emerging at an alarming rate, mostly affecting young adults at their prime age. This is going to have negative economic consequences not only due additional necessary investments in health and social care and support, but also due to the lowered capacity of the working population.



Mission

The main role of the NDPHS Expert Group on HIV/AIDS (in short HIV/AIDS EG) is to act as the focal point for national inputs from the Partner Countries and Organisations. In this capacity, the HIV/AIDS EG has the overall objectives to:

- Work towards the inclusion of policies that emphasise the priority of HIV/AIDS on political agendas;
- Support co-ordinated and collaborative efforts to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS in Northern Europe; and
- Promote networking and Partnership building among relevant stakeholders.

The HIV/AIDS EG has prioritised its work on the evaluation of national AIDS policies; surveillance; general awareness and policy development; legislation; prevention, as well as treatment, care and support. The Expert Group has also an advisory role and provides professional input to the preparation and implementation of joint activities carried out within the framework of the NDPHS.

Areas of action

The following are examples of responsibilities of the Expert Group on HIV/AIDS:

- Promote the principles and objectives of the NDPHS in the field of HIV/AIDS and develop strong partnerships with a wide variety of stakeholders to ensure that the NDPHS achieves maximum results;
- Establish and maintain relations with the Partner Countries and Organisations, as well as with international and national organisations and other institutions;
- Establish connections and co-operation with other NDPHS Expert Groups;
- Facilitate project planning processes by expediting relevant technical reviews, negotiating specific terms and conditions, and establishing assessment mechanisms, with an emphasis on performance and verifiable results. In this respect, the Expert Group can identify needs and develop initiatives for new projects, identify actors and new partners;
- In selected cases, act as a technical referee for new project proposals in planning, implementation and monitoring;
- Contribute to the development of national policies that respond to the needs and requirements of Partner Countries;
- Map and identify Member Countries' needs for technical and financial support to scale-up national HIV/AIDS programmes, and encourage requests for assistance;

- Support efforts to provide technical and other forms of assistance to governmental and national partners in planning, implementing and monitoring programs to scale up HIV/AIDS treatment, care and prevention;
- Monitor and evaluate the results of projects and activities implemented under the NDPHS.

Activities

The Expert Group has published a thematic report on “HIV/AIDS in the Baltic Sea Region and Northwest Russia” (www.ndphs.org/?database.view.paper.20), which provides an overview of the HIV/AIDS situation in our region. It contains data as well as recommendations to address the HIV/AIDS challenges through policy and project implementation.

The Expert Group is also coordinating and monitoring numerous collaborative projects in the Northern Dimension region. Over 20 projects are coordinated / monitored by the HIV/AIDS EG and the total amount of money allocated from various donors exceeds 7 million euro. Examples of projects monitored and/or coordinated by the HIV/AIDS EG include:

- “Controlling the spread of HIV/AIDS in the Barents and Northern Dimension Partnership Programme Regions in 2005–2007.” Financed by Finland;
- “Development of low-threshold services for injecting drug users to prevent the spread of HIV in Murmansk and adoption and implementation of the principles and experience to Leningrad oblast.” Financed by Finland;
- “Development of Low-Threshold-Center activities in the region.” Coordination: Latvia. Participants: Estonia, Lithuania, Finland and Bulgaria. Financiers: EU, national governments;
- “Prevention of HIV infection in the Republic of Karelia in 2007–2009.” Coordination and financing: Finland;
- “Psychological and social support to HIV-infected women in Leningrad Oblast 2007–2009.” Coordination and financing: Finland.

Leadership

The Expert Group on HIV/AIDS is led by Lead Partner Finland.

Learn more

This fact sheet was developed by the NDPHS Expert Group on HIV/AIDS and can be downloaded in “Papers” section of the NDPHS Database (www.ndphs.org/?database).

Further information about this Expert Group and its activities can be found on the NDPHS website at www.ndphs.org/?hiv-aids_eg and be obtained from:

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