

Outcomes of the HIV in Europe Initiative

Annual Report 2011

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Background

The HIV in Europe Initiative started in Brussels in 2007 with a seminal pan-European conference entitled “HIV in Europe 2007: Working together for optimal testing and earlier care”. In November 2009, a follow-up meeting in Stockholm was held under the auspices of the Swedish Presidency of the European Union, and the 3rd HIV in Europe conference will be held in Copenhagen in March 2012.

The HIV in Europe initiative is led by a group of independent experts representing advocacy, clinical and policy areas of the HIV field in Europe. The objective of the initiative is to create a platform for exchange and awareness of good practices on HIV testing and early diagnosis, and to thereby contribute to reducing the number of the undiagnosed population and the number of people entering care late in the European Union and neighboring countries, as well as decreasing health-inequalities as to access to HIV treatment and care in the European Union.

Status 2011 and Next Steps

In February 2011, the Steering Committee of HIV in Europe met in Copenhagen to discuss possible research themes, events and projects for 2011-2012 and decide on the future structure of the initiative. The outcome of the meeting was the approval of a number of projects presented below. Those include the organisation of the 3rd HIV in Europe Conference to be held in Copenhagen 19-20 March 2012, a location chosen to interact with the Danish EU Presidency. The other important decision pertained to the strategic priority to reinforce the collaboration with Eastern European countries and engage with senior officials.

The HIV in Europe initiative has influenced and in some cases dictated the policy and normative discourse on testing and early access to care in Europe through the research projects it has initiated, the scientific conferences it has organised and its policy & advocacy work. The initiative has established itself as a pan-European platform for sharing ideas and knowledge and is recognised as an important stakeholder in the fight against HIV/AIDS. It has generated numerous abstracts and articles to a large number of conferences and journals during the last 3 years.

Achievements and Project Results 2011

HIDES (HIV Indicator Diseases across Europe Study) – results from phase 1

HIDES 1 was concluded in February 2011, followed by analysis of data of the approximately 3500 patients enrolled into the surveys presenting with indicator conditions and offered an HIV test. The results were presented at the EACS conference, Belgrade, October 2011 and will be published in 2012.

Conclusions:

HIDES I describes an effective strategy to detect undiagnosed HIV infection. All 8 ID investigated fulfilled the >0.1% criterion for cost effectiveness. All individuals presenting to any health care setting with one of these ID should be recommended an HIV test. A strategy is currently being developed in collaboration with

ECDC and WHO Europe aimed at guiding the implementation of this novel public health initiative across Europe.

HIDES (HIV indicator diseases across Europe study): results from the pilot phase
[presented at the EACS Conference](#), Belgrade, October 2011

2011 HIV in European Region, Unity and Diversity, Tallinn Conference May 2011, HIV in Europe Study; a pilot feasibility and acceptability study of HIV testing in selected Indicator Conditions
Ann Sullivan, Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, United Kingdom

The people living with HIV Stigma Index – Result 2011

The study “HIV-related Stigma: Late Testing, Late Treatment supported by HIV in Europe was launched in May 2011 at the European Conference “HIV in European Region: Unity and Diversity”, confirmed that an alarming number of people who suspect being HIV positive get tested late.

- [HIV-related Stigma: Late Testing, Late Treatment](#), May 2011
[Late Testing, Late Treatment, Russian version](#)
- Press release - HIV in Europe, European AIDS Conference, Tallinn 25-27 May, [Press release](#)

2011 HIV in European Region, Unity and Diversity, Tallinn Conference May 2011, various presentations on the stigma index from Estonia, Moldova, Poland, Turkey and Ukraine.

Methods for estimating the undiagnosed Project

HIV in hiding AIDS 2011 Publication. [Methods and data requirements for the estimation of the number of people living with undiagnosed HIV. Working Group on Estimation of HIV Prevalence in Europe](#)

European Parliament Resolution, December 2011

HIV in Europe welcomes the European Parliament resolution on the EU response to HIV/AIDS in the EU and neighbouring countries and the strong commitment to HIV expressed by the European Commission
[HIV in Europe response](#)
[European Parliament Resolution, December 2011](#)

HIV in Europe 2012 Conference

European Parliamentary Magazine - HIV supplement
[Article about the upcoming HIV in Europe 2012 Conference](#)

Approved projects (2011-2012)

Project	Description	Project lead	Period
Coordination, Communication, Fundraising and Political Advocacy	Secretariat function, website, fundraising, political profiling, travel, SC meetings, communication etc	Coordination Secretariat: CHIP, Copenhagen and Advocacy Secretariat: EATG, Brussels	2011-2012
Copenhagen 2012 Conference	3 rd HIV in Europe Conference, 19-20 March 2012	CHIP	2012
HIDES II – The HIV Indicator Diseases across Europe Study – phase II	Phase 2: Surveys (n=14000), audits (n=5000), testing guidelines recommendations	CHIP	2011-2012
The people living with HIV stigma index – phase II From evidence to action	Development of advocacy and action plans in the 5 phase I countries	GNP+	2011-2012
The HIV-COBATEST Project	Acceptability, feasibility and impact of community-based testing practices	ICO/Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona	2011-2012
HIV in Europe Eastern Europe 2012 Conference	Russia or another country		2012/2013
Others	Best practice platform Other projects: to be defined in March/April 2012		2012-2013

Copenhagen 2012 Conference

The expected outcomes of the conference and concrete deliverables are:

- Conference report with work plan and objectives 2012-13.
- Articles in European (news)papers.
- Consensus and engagement of broader HIV testing expert community related to next steps to improve the evidence base within the area of optimal testing and earlier care.
- Press release on Conference results.

- Further execution and strategy for implementation of the collaborative projects, the outcome of which will be:
- Publication of paper describing the epidemiology of HIV presenters across the European continent from 2002-2011, which will thereafter be updated as an annual report to be distributed to the initiative, the Commission, WHO Europe and ECDC.
- Publication of the result of a survey to assess HIV prevalence for 8 HIV indicator diseases across Europe and phase II to further define which diseases indicate a person should also be tested for HIV.
- How to implement and share results of the Stigma Index in the European region.
- To dialogue on the cost-effectiveness of HIV testing and the considerations around how scaling up HIV testing can contribute to more sustainable health systems.

The Conference is financially supported by the EU.

HIV in Europe moving East

The projects of HIV in Europe are to a great extent implemented in Eastern European countries. The stigma index project builds on data from Estonia, Moldova, Poland, Turkey and Ukraine and approximately 40% of persons enrolled into the phase I of the HIV Indicator Diseases across Europe study are from Eastern European countries. Further, the approved HIV-COBATEST project will be implemented in Eastern Europe.

The Steering Committee in collaboration with WHO Europe is discussing the possibility of arranging a conference in Eastern Europe in 2012 or 2013 on testing to discuss barriers to testing from an Eastern European perspective.



Financial statement

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The HIV in Europe Study Group

HIV in Europe Steering Committee: Co-Chairs: Ton Coenen, AIDS Action Europe, Executive Director Aids Fonds & Soa Aids Nederland, Netherlands and Jens Lundgren, Professor & Chief Physician, University of Copenhagen & Rigshospitalet, Director, Copenhagen HIV Programme, Denmark, Members: Jordi Casabona, Scientific Director, Center for HIV/STI Epidemiological Studies of Catalonia Nikos Dedes, European AIDS Treatment Group (EATG), Greece, José Gatell, Head, Infectious Diseases & AIDS Units, Clinical Institute of Medicine & Dermatology, Hospital Clinic, Professor of Medicine, University of Barcelona, Spain, Brian Gazzard, Professor of Medicine, Imperial College School of Medicine, HIV Research Director, Chelsea & Westminster Hospital, UK, Igor Karpov, Professor, Department of Infectious Diseases, Belarus State Medical University, Jürgen Rockstroh, Professor of Medicine University of Bonn and Head of an HIV outpatient clinic, Germany, Anders Sönnerborg, MD, PhD, Professor, Department of Medicine Karolinska University Hospital, Sweden, John de Wit, Professor of Sociology, Utrecht University, The Netherlands, Observers: WHO Regional Office for Europe, STI/HIV/AIDS Programme, Represented by Lali Kottenashvili, European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), Represented by Marita van de Laar, PhD, European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), Represented by Lucas Wiessing, epidemiologist, principal scientist, The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, Represented by Vitaly Zhumagliev, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Represented by Kevin Fenton, UNAIDS Regional Support Team ECA, Represented by Jean-Elie Malkin.

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Working Group on Estimation of HIV Prevalence in Europe (conveners: Andrew Phillips and Rebecca Lodwick, University College London Medical School, Royal Free Campus, London, UK)

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The people living with HIV Stigma Index Advisory Group: Wojciech Tomczynski on behalf of ECUO (the Eastern European Network for People living with HIV), Henrik Arildsen on behalf of HIV Europe (the European Network for People living with HIV), Jurek Domaradzki on behalf of the European Aids Treatment Group, Julian Hows on behalf of GNP+, Ton Coenen on behalf of the HIV in Europe Steering Committee.

