

Terms of Reference

International Expert for drafting National Strategy on Micro-elimination of Viral Hepatitis C among HIV/TB/HCV co-infected persons from KPs (PLWH, PWID and partners MSM, SW)

Мікроелімінація ВГС серед ВІЛ/ТБ/ВГС коінфікованих пацієнтів з груп ризику ЛЖВ, ЛВНІ та їх партнери, ЧСЧ, РСБ (комплексний пакет послуг)

07.05.2021

The International Charitable Foundation “Alliance for Public Health” (formerly known as the International Charitable Foundation “International HIV/AIDS Alliance in Ukraine” until November 2015) (hereinafter – Alliance) is a leading non-governmental professional organization making a significant impact on the epidemics of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, viral hepatitis and other communicable diseases in Ukraine. In cooperation with state partners and civil society organizations, it provides financial and technical support to programs, covering over 300,000 representatives of the most vulnerable populations: the highest such coverage indicator in Europe.

Our Mission is to support community action against HIV/AIDS, to reduce the spread of HIV and related epidemics through disseminating effective services and approaches, strengthening health care systems and social services, and building the capacity of vulnerable communities.

Major programs successfully implemented by Alliance since 2004 are funded by GFATM. The Alliance for Public Health is one of three principal recipients of the grant from the Global Fund for 2021-2023.

Present ToR is developed within GFATM 2021-2023 program for Ukraine “Gain Momentum in Reducing TB/HIV Burden in Ukraine” to follow programmatic activities related to the Micro-elimination of Hepatitis C among HIV/TB/HCV coinfected persons from KPs (PLWH, PWID, and partners MSM, SW).

Scope and Purpose

HepC in Ukraine is a serious public health burden. Following targets set by WHO MoH of Ukraine developed and endorsed National strategy for HIV, TB, and Viral Hepatitis control. This strategy identifies HepC elimination as a national target to reach by 2030 and indicates Micro-elimination as an effective instrument to bring closer national elimination goals.

Since HCV Micro-elimination programs for PWID are recommended by WHO for the countries with high burden disease and for the countries that are not yet prepared to fully implement national elimination, GFATM supported and approved within its 2021-2023 grant for Ukraine. Alliance initiative on Micro-elimination of Viral Hepatitis C among HIV/TB/HCV co-infected persons from KPs (PLWH, PWID, and partners MSM, SW) as a separate grant component (hereinafter – HCV Micro-elimination).

This ToR is aimed to invite an international expert to develop in cooperation with the government and other main stakeholders at national and local levels, national strategy of HCV Micro-elimination. Based on mapping and understanding the current situation regarding hepatitis C, this document should set micro-elimination goals, coverage, beneficiaries, annual targets and identify requirements, the scope of compulsory interventions and list of “must” activities, indicators, approaches, M&E tools, binding recommendations, deliverables/outcomes etc. The designed document will be present to the government -Public Health Center and Ministry of Health of Ukraine (hereinafter – PHC and MOH) for endorsement and further actions.

Methods:

- Desk review of programmatic and epi data will be performed first, including national strategy and action plan on hepatitis elimination, national statistical and epi data, internal legislative documents and budgetary provisions, international best practices, GF grant 2021-2023 for Ukraine etc;
- Data collection and analysis take a retrospective approach;

- On- line interview and periodic discussions with Alliance and PHC relevant staff;
- Close cooperation with the national expert, invited by Alliance for the purpose of drafting the strategy, through on-line communications using different platforms;
- Any other methods suggested by expert.

National Context

Ukraine has the second-largest HIV epidemic in Eastern Europe and Central Asia region. According to national statistics, by January 1, 2020, a total of 169,787 people with HIV were officially registered.

The estimated number of people living with HIV (PLHIV) in Ukraine is 250,777 (SPECTRUM 2020). The epidemic is concentrated in key populations, with the prevalence of 22.5% among PWID, 5.2% among sex workers (SW), and 7.5% among men who have sex with men (MSM) (IBBS 2018).

HCV prevalence in Ukraine is 5%, which means that up to 2 million persons are HCV-infected and need diagnostic and treatment. Among KPs HIV/HCV co-infection is most common. HCV/HIV coinfecting persons from PWID are a particularly important population to treat due to their high prevalence and a dynamic spread of infection among the general population. Alliance IBBS 2018 showed up to 63,9% PWID are HCV infected, in those aged 25+more than 66%. WHO data shows that Ukraine is the only country in the European region that is on the list of the 28 countries with the highest burden of viral hepatitis in the world.

In 2017 Government of Ukraine started to procure DAAs at the expense of the state budget, but HCV laboratory diagnostics is not provided on regular basis neither before treatment nor to evaluate HCV treatment outcomes. Social support for KPs is unavailable.

HCV Micro-elimination is recognized by the National Strategy for HIV, TB and Viral Hepatitis as a pathway to achieve national elimination goals.

HCV Micro-elimination in current GFATM grant component (Objectives, Coverage, Activities)

Micro-elimination of Viral Hepatitis C among HIV/TB/HCV co-infected persons from KPs (PLWH, PWID, and partners MSM, SW) is designed as a separate component of the 2021-2023 GF grant for Ukraine. It is considered as a comprehensive package of services including screening, diagnostic, treatment, and its results monitoring, care, support, and education of patients.

This component is currently implemented in close partnership with the government and other stakeholders. A co-financing mechanism is applied: DAAs are provided by the government from annual MOH procurement. State procured DAAs are supplied to PHF in the field to reach most in need populations and make HCV treatment most accessible for KPs. The Public Health Center of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine is supervising the distribution/re-distribution of DAAs in the field.

Alliance further practices its model of community-based HCV treatment, which rests on HCV simplified diagnostic provided by Alliance, pan genotyping treatment regimens provided by the government, social support, and education provided by local NGOs with Alliance support. Local NGOs selected within open tender provide referrals, counseling, support, and education of patients as well as interventions aimed at the prevention of HCV reinfection.

For 2021-2023 approved coverage for Alliance is 3,000 patients annually and 9,000 patients per GF whole program period of three years.

Main activities: referrals of patients from Alliance HIV prevention programs, services related to effective case management based on community's involvement (NGOs); HCV simplified laboratory diagnostic; training of social workers on raising awareness, retention on treatment and reinfection prevention practices, treatment results monitoring, reporting; social support of patients.

International Expert Tasks and Outputs/Deliverables

Tasks:

1. To establish close cooperation with the national consultant invited by Alliance by means of e-mail correspondence, video conferences and on-line meetings;
2. To present methodology and scenario of HCV Micro-elimination strategy for Ukraine based on the desk review of programmatic, epi data and internationally recognized HCV Micro-elimination good practices;
3. To develop draft of the national strategy on HCV Micro-elimination among HIV/TB/HCV co-infected persons from KPs (PLWH, PWID and partners MSM, SW) including scope and purpose, targeted groups and their estimated coverage, key and supportive interventions, general and annual coverage of patients, time lines, major bottlenecks/risks for meeting targets etc;

4. To develop action plan for HCV Micro-elimination program implementation with identified tasks and deliverables, set time limits, interventions and detailed activities, M&E tools and indicators;
5. To prepare and submit final report on the work performed.

Key outcomes:

1. Methodology and scenario of HCV Micro-elimination strategy described, presented, discussed and approved by Alliance;
2. Draft of the of the national strategy on HCV Micro-elimination among HIV/TB/HCV co-infected persons from KPs (PLWH, PWID and partners MSM, SW) presented to Alliance, discussed and approved;
3. Draft of the action plan is presented to Alliance and approved;
4. Final report submitted and approved by Alliance.

Timeline: The total number of 15 consultancy days is budgeted for the given assignment.

Duration of the contract:

The work should be completed within two months' period from the start date. The start date is the date when the consultancy agreement (the contract) is signed by all parties of the consultancy agreement.

Terms of Service Provision and Remuneration

The work is expected to start after signing of the specific consultancy agreement between Alliance and consultant. Consultant undertakes to provide Alliance with the services related to public health according to this ToR. The consultant will closely coordinate with the Alliance Treatment, Procurement and Supplies Management Director and HCV Team Manager to ensure effective delivery of the outputs.

Remuneration will be paid based on submitted final report and acceptance of the service under the Agreement. Payment will be made based on the signed Acceptance Certificate.

Final number of consultancy days and fee are subjected for negotiation in line with the budget availability.

Institutional Requirements**Experience/Knowledge**

- Educational background in public health, health policy, epidemiology, public administration and in other relevant fields (or commensurable working experience);
- Strong background in public health and in the area of developing and establishing policies and strategies;
- Minimum 5 years of experience in developing national strategic plans in Viral hepatitis control/elimination, and in developing HCV care guides;
- Knowledge and understanding of international response to HCV and its good practices, WHO recommended strategies;
- Understanding of HCV epidemiology and health system in Ukraine, HCV policies and interventions as well as good understanding of overall context of the HCV national programs specifics;
- Familiarity with the HCV actors in the country and the country-specific social context they operate in;
- Proven experience in developing recommendations and strategies;
- Proven involvement and successful experience in similar and/or relevant consulting or professional services of complexity and technical specialty comparable to the services listed in TOR – at least 5 years;
- Experience working in academic institutions, universities, United Nations organizations/agencies, international institutions or international NGOs is desirable;
- Knowledge of Ukrainian or Russian is an asset.

Skills

- Excellent knowledge Hep C elimination programmes;
- Excellent knowledge of the theories, principles, methods and processes of Hep C elimination and its evidence base.
- Advanced technical expertise in evidence synthesis for complex interventions and in guideline development processes;
- Technical expertise and experience in planning, implementing, reviewing and documenting large-scale

- community-based and facility-based programmes related to Hep C elimination activities;
- Ability to maintain close contact with Alliance staff on matters related to drafting national Hep C micro-elimination strategy;
 - Ability to develop guidelines, programmatic guidance, practice tool, and recommendations for strengthening HCV prevention, diagnostic and treatment and inter-sectoral cooperation between all key HCV stakeholders;
 - Ability to produce reports and papers for dissemination and to present information clearly, especially in writing;
 - Knowledge of statistics and statistical and data analysis;
 - Ability to work independently and respond to in a timely and professional manner remotely.

CV submissions and Deadline

The contract will be awarded on the competitive basis to a Consultant/Expert with the highest qualifications and meeting all requirements described in ToR.

Expression of interest should contain the following documents:

- CV with proven experience and qualifications (in English, not more than 3 pages);
- Motivation letter (in English, not more than 1 page), clearly describing existing experience in the area of the proposed assignment.

All documents for expression of your interest should be submitted electronically to: zubko@aph.org.ua with cc tsenilova@aph.org.ua with the notice *International Expert for HCV Micro-elimination Program Development*

Deadline: June 30, 2021