

## Vacancy:

### **Sos Project Consultant - Operational Research Project Launch Coordinator**

#### **Background**

The Alliance for Public Health and its partners are implementing the second phase of a regional project - Sustainability of Services for Key Populations in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region (SoS\_project 2.0), that is funded by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria for 2022 – 2024. The project has three major objectives:

1. Institutionalizing effective models of, and processes in, HIV responses in the EECA region to impact the HIV care cascade in the region.
2. Removing barriers to services for key populations to promote quality health interventions based on human rights principles; addressing gender barriers to services.
3. Budget advocacy for sustainable services for key populations in the EECA region.

Among other activities and directions of work, within the project, the team is planning to implement an operational study on substitution therapy (ST) for stimulant drug users in Ukraine.

In recent years the region has seen a significant growth in the uptake of stimulant drugs, especially amphetamines and amphetamine type substances (ATS) within the general psychoactive substances use. At the same time, most treatment programs that exist for people who use drugs are directed specifically at injecting opioid drug users. Stimulants are often disregarded as a less important or dangerous drug, which is just used for fun by young people and teenagers. At the same time it is a serious underestimation of its significance and influence on the health and well-being of the population and on the risks of HIV epidemics distribution in particular. The way stimulants influence the body and brain of the people who take them, often leads to engaging in risky behaviour, mental health issues and can lead to acquiring HIV. The programs that are aimed at treating stimulant users are very scarce in the world and are basically absent in the EECA region. Stimulant drug use is an overlapping issue that is relevant not just for people who use drugs but also other key population groups, such as men who have sex with men, TG people, sex workers, especially in regards to chemsex patterns.

In some more developed countries of the world, ST for stimulant users is receiving more attention and has been researched and piloted to some extent. ST for stimulants had started in the UK and Australia as well as in the Czech Republic. It emphasises prescribing stimulant type drugs for stimulant users in a controlled safe dose and with a scheme of uptake. The Czech Republic uses Methylphenidate, whereas Australia and Great Britain are using Dexamphetamine. The latter is slightly more difficult to obtain and introduce in the programs on a national level, while it does show a better level of adherence among clients.

Within the regional project, we propose to develop and pilot a stimulant users ST model/program and evaluate its effectiveness to enable its adaptation and finalisation for proposal to governments in the countries of the region. We intend to launch a program for up to 100 people who use amphetamine or amphetamine type stimulants (ATS) and provide them with substitution therapy

using the drug that will be available for purchase and distribution at the time of the pilot for a period of 12 months. The 12-months period will be used for the development of the model and relevant changes to the legislation and regulations need to be made to enable substitution therapy provision to stimulant users in Ukraine. Rest of the project implementation time will be utilised for piloting, evaluation, further advocacy and policy adaptation/making processes in Ukraine and scaling up to other countries.

To support the APH in-house coordination and management of the implementation, APH is looking for a qualified person to fulfil the below vacancy.

### **Objective of Position**

To ensure effective launch of the operational research/pilot project by providing overall coordination of the component development, planning, preparation and all relevant processes.

### **Main Responsibilities**

1. Coordinate all aspects of the operational research preparation work, including:
  - leading relevant multi-stakeholder communication and negotiations required to achieve the outcomes of the first year of the project
  - hiring relevant additional experts and coordinating their work if/as required
  - identifying partner organisations and coordinating planning of subgrants or other types of collaboration with them related to the implementation of the pilot
  - take active part in the development of the operational research protocol
  - analyse the normative base related to the issue
  - draft documents that are required to introduce necessary changes are developed
  - analyse the situation with and contribute to necessary changes to ensure the possibility to purchase and use the necessary medicine within the project
  - take part in relevant working groups on the topics related to the planned research
  - researching the issue and moving along the process of registration of medications
2. Communicate with project team and management to keep them up to date on the process
3. Document the process and gather relevant information to inform future actions within this component of work
4. Communicate with project team and management as well as other relevant APH and partner organisations experts, including to identify synergies
5. Contribute to other project activities (eg progress sharing, collaboration and partnership building, etc) as related to this component of work
6. Suggest appropriate structural, managerial, financial and programmatic solutions to achieve optimal results of the pilot project.
7. Contribute to the evaluation and strategic review of the Alliance program.
8. Attend relevant expert meetings to gather information and represent the interests of the Alliance Program.
9. Contribute to preparation of the narrative reports.

### **Expected outcomes**

1. The operational research protocol is developed
2. The normative base is analysed
3. Draft documents to make necessary amendments into the normative base are prepared
4. The possibility of the purchase and usage of the necessary medication within the project is ensured

## **Required Competencies and Qualifications**

1. Strong commitment to confronting HIV/AIDS and motivation to work in this area.
2. Experience of working in the area and knowledge of the topics of drug use (specifically stimulant drug use), OST programs, prevention and treatment programs for these populations and mental health/medicine/psychiatry is a big advantage.
3. Experience of coordinating research projects and involvement in carrying out research - protocol development, methodology development, research instruments development, etc.
4. Experience of communicating with and collaboration with official institutions in the area of public health, medical institutions and the target population is a big advantage.
5. At least 5 years of experience in HIV prevention, care and support including overseeing the development and implementation of HIV/AIDS related programs.
6. Working experience with/in HIV-service organizations, local NGOs, governmental, and/or international institutions.
7. Knowledge of epidemiological situation and specifics of HIV/AIDS programs in the Ukraine (and the region) is desirable.
8. Relevant University degree (Public Health, Social Science, Medicine etc.) is a plus.
9. Good command of written and spoken Ukrainian and Russian. Ability to read and understand English texts is essential. Knowledge of English at intermediate level is an advantage.
10. High level of computer literacy, especially in Excel.
11. Ability to perform assigned tasks independently.
12. Ability to meet tough and multiple deadlines.
13. Readiness to go on business trips.

**Languages:** English and Russian

### **We offer**

A friendly innovative environment as a part of a cross-country three-year project with an international team based worldwide and a competitive compensation package.

### **Applications**

Interested qualified applicants should send their CV and cover letter to [obilous@aph.org.ua](mailto:obilous@aph.org.ua) not later than **31 March 2022**.