



World AIDS Day 2024:

# ADDRESSING HIV DURING WARTIME IN UKRAINE — WE WILL WIN TOGETHER!

December 1, 2024

\* Photo shows an MTP doctor examining a patient in a mobile clinic near a building with broken windows



**20% of Ukrainian territory occupied by russia**



**Refugees and displaced persons:**

6.7 million Ukrainian refugees worldwide — approximately twice the population of Kyiv.



**Medical infrastructure damage:**

At least \$7 billion in damages to Ukraine's healthcare system caused by russia.

1,877 medical institutions and 876 pharmacies significantly damaged or destroyed.

Every 5th ambulance has been damaged.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF 2024:

### 1. HIV CASE FINDING AND ARV TREATMENT

One in every three people diagnosed with HIV in Ukraine in 2024 — and among all those who started ART for the first time — was tested, diagnosed, and referred to medical facilities by APH and its partner organizations funded by APH.

### 2. SUSTAINING KEY PROGRAMS

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### 3. GAME-CHANGING INNOVATIONS

In collaboration with the governmental Public Health Center and other partners, APH is leading the implementation of CAB-LA, a long-acting PrEP, in Ukraine. Over 105 patients have already received their second injection. Additionally, APH provides funding for psycho-social support to OAT patients using Buvidal, an injectable medication. Mobile health services have also been significantly expanded nationwide.

Our innovative strategies include using artificial intelligence (AI) to identify individuals at the highest risk of HIV infection and encourage them to get tested. We have also extended our services beyond core groups, offering HIV and TB support to internally displaced persons (IDPs), people living in recently de-occupied territories, and military personnel.

### 4. PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

APH has been pivotal in addressing the humanitarian needs of people living with HIV and other key affected populations. Our support includes: evacuations and humanitarian aid; provision of food, essential medical services, medications, and diagnostics; mental health support; shelters and housing for internally displaced people; ongoing human rights advocacy through the REAct mechanism; 24/7 online support through HelpNOW for Ukrainian war refugees in 51 countries.

 **READ:** PREVIOUS REPORTS 

 **DONATE:** SUPPORT UKRAINE 

# 1. NEW CASE IDENTIFICATION: HIV TESTING

**33% OF ALL NEW HIV CASES IN UKRAINE WERE IDENTIFIED WITHIN PROGRAMS IMPLEMENTED BY THE ALLIANCE**

Our regional partners, supported by the Alliance, conducted HIV testing for 115,000 people from key populations. This effort led to the identification of 2,794 new HIV cases - nearly every third case was identified through Alliance projects!

## Testing models in Alliance projects that ensure high detection rates among key populations:

- Under the Global Fund project (January–October 2024), HIV testing was conducted among 8,388 PWID, 4,106 SW, and 3,683 MSM using the Optimized Case-Finding (OCF) model. Detection rates were 4% among PWID, 8% among SW, and 3% among MSM.
- HIV self-testing was provided for individuals with limited access to conventional prevention services, distributing nearly 10,000 self-testing kits through Alliance programs.
- Mobile teams conducted visits to military personnel at their deployment sites, providing consultations and rapid testing for HIV, hepatitis B, and hepatitis C. Over 50,000 service members were tested, resulting in the early detection of HIV in 134 individuals (0.26%), hepatitis B in 213 individuals (0.46%), and hepatitis C in 1,046 individuals (2.05%). All individuals with positive results were referred to the healthcare system or military hospitals for diagnosis confirmation and treatment.

**Despite active combat near frontline areas and significant migration within central, southern, and western Ukraine**, the OCF/MCF CDC project ("Improving HIV Case Finding and Access to Treatment for People Who Inject Drugs in Ukraine") continued optimized HIV detection efforts among key populations (PWID and their partners) and emerging risk groups (non-injecting drug users, IDPs, military personnel, individuals with alcohol dependence, homeless individuals, and partners of SW).

Activities were conducted in Kyiv, Chernihiv, Kherson, Dnipropetrovsk, Cherkasy, Kirovohrad, Kharkiv, Mykolaiv, Odesa, Lviv, and Zaporizhzhia regions.

There are two modalities of the project: via NGO and mobile ambulatories.

**During the project year 2024**, despite ongoing air raid alarms, testing continued in shelters, open fields, and heating pipelines. Efforts to engage hard-to-reach clients resulted in the following outcomes:

- **78,579** clients tested
- **2,560** clients confirmed HIV+ diagnos
- **3,386** clients initiated ART (new and IIT)

Additionally, **3,124** clients enrolled in a 12-month community-led psychosocial support program (CIRI) to build sustainable treatment adherence.

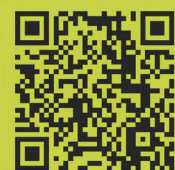




## 2. ENSURING CONTINUOUS PREVENTION AND HARM REDUCTION FOR DRUG USE

ОНЛАЙН ТА ОФЛАЙН ПРОФІЛАКТИЧНІ ПОСЛУГИ ДЛЯ МОЛОДИХ ПРЕДСТАВНИКІВ КЛЮЧОВИХ СПІЛЬНОТ

drugstore  
project



IN 2024, THE ALLIANCE AND ITS PARTNERS PROVIDED ESSENTIAL HIV SERVICES TO **OVER 83,000 INDIVIDUALS FROM HIGH-RISK POPULATIONS**, 26% OF WHOM WERE NEW PROGRAM CLIENTS.

- **4,099 transgender individuals** received HIV/STI prevention services, counseling, and rapid HIV testing through assisted testing.
- *Access to hormone replacement therapy for trans individuals:* 180 clients received 2,239 packages of feminizing and masculinizing hormone therapy medications.
- In April 2024, the intervention “Reaching Hard-to-Access Key Groups Through Peer-Led Implementation” was launched. Over 7 months, more than 8,900 key population representatives were reached and tested, including 4,097 PWID, 4,295 MSM, and 550 transgender individuals. The percentage of new, hard-to-reach individuals engaged in the intervention was 92.5% among PWID, 93.2% among MSM, and 90% among transgender individuals.
- **Youth experimenting with psychoactive substances (PAS)** received 2,460 harm reduction PartyBox kits containing oral HIV tests, lubricants, condoms, and other items.
- For MSM engaging in chemsex, 1,344 harm reduction PartyBox kits were distributed, which included oral HIV tests, lubricants, condoms, and reagents for checking psychoactive substances.

# 3. EXPANDING PRE-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS (PREP) ACCESS WITH THE SUPPORT OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND COMMUNITIES

From January to October 2024, **3,134** individuals from key populations were enrolled in the PrEP program through referral and support programs backed by the Alliance. Thanks to Alliance support programs, **over 1,000** individuals resumed PrEP after interruptions during this period.

**INNOVATION:** In mid-August 2024, the Alliance, with the support of the PHC and CDC, launched the implementation of long-acting injectable cabotegravir (CAB-LA) for PrEP in Ukraine. This medication is administered as follows: the first two injections are given one month apart, with all subsequent injections administered once every two months. To date, 105 patients have received the first injection, 93 have received the second injection, and 1 patient has received the third injection. Following this successful launch, further expansion of the intervention is planned.

During the 2024 project year, under the OCF CDC project ("Improving HIV Case Finding and Access to Treatment for People Who Inject Drugs in Ukraine"), 1,153 clients were referred for PrEP services.



More about CAB-LA program in Ukraine:  
[tiktok.com/@longprep](https://tiktok.com/@longprep)





# 4. BRINGING SERVICES CLOSER TO CLIENTS: ADAPTING SERVICES WITH **MOBILE CLINICS**

**THE NUMBER OF HIV PREVENTION AND TESTING SERVICE VISITS TO 22 MOBILE CLINICS (GF) EXCEEDED 120,000, SURPASSING THE PLANNED TARGET BY 32%.**

In 2024, the Alliance's mobile clinics under the MTP project brought HIV testing services to hard-to-reach frontline villages in Zaporizhzhia, Kharkiv, Kherson, Donetsk, Mykolaiv, and Dnipropetrovsk regions. A total of 649 individuals, including key population members, accessed services, with 3 new HIV cases identified. In collaboration with the MCF project, patients requiring treatment received social support to initiate ART.





## 5. TREATMENT, CARE, AND SUPPORT

In January 2024, the Alliance, in partnership with the PHC of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine and with financial support from the Global Fund, launched the intervention “**Payment to Healthcare Facilities for Medical Services Provided to Unidentified (Undocumented) HIV Patients.**” This program is being implemented by 27 healthcare facilities across 18 regions and Kyiv city.

During the first half of 2024, the intervention supported 106 unique clients, including:

- **41 enrolled** in medical care
- **31 initiated** ART
- **18 resumed** ART
- **57 applied** for document recovery
- **7 successfully restored** their documents

The total amount reimbursed to healthcare facilities in the first half of the year was **191,000 UAH.**

In OCF/MCF - CITI - CIRI project 3,124 PWID and their partners, who initiated ART were enrolled in a 12-month Community Initiated Retention Intervention (CIRI) to maintain and develop treatment adherence. Intervention include peer-to-peer case management, psychological consultations, and two times VL measurements during a year of support. Average retention rate in the intervention is 70%, which is an incredible result for a highly marginalized risk population.

## 6. PREVENTION AND OVERDOSE MITIGATION

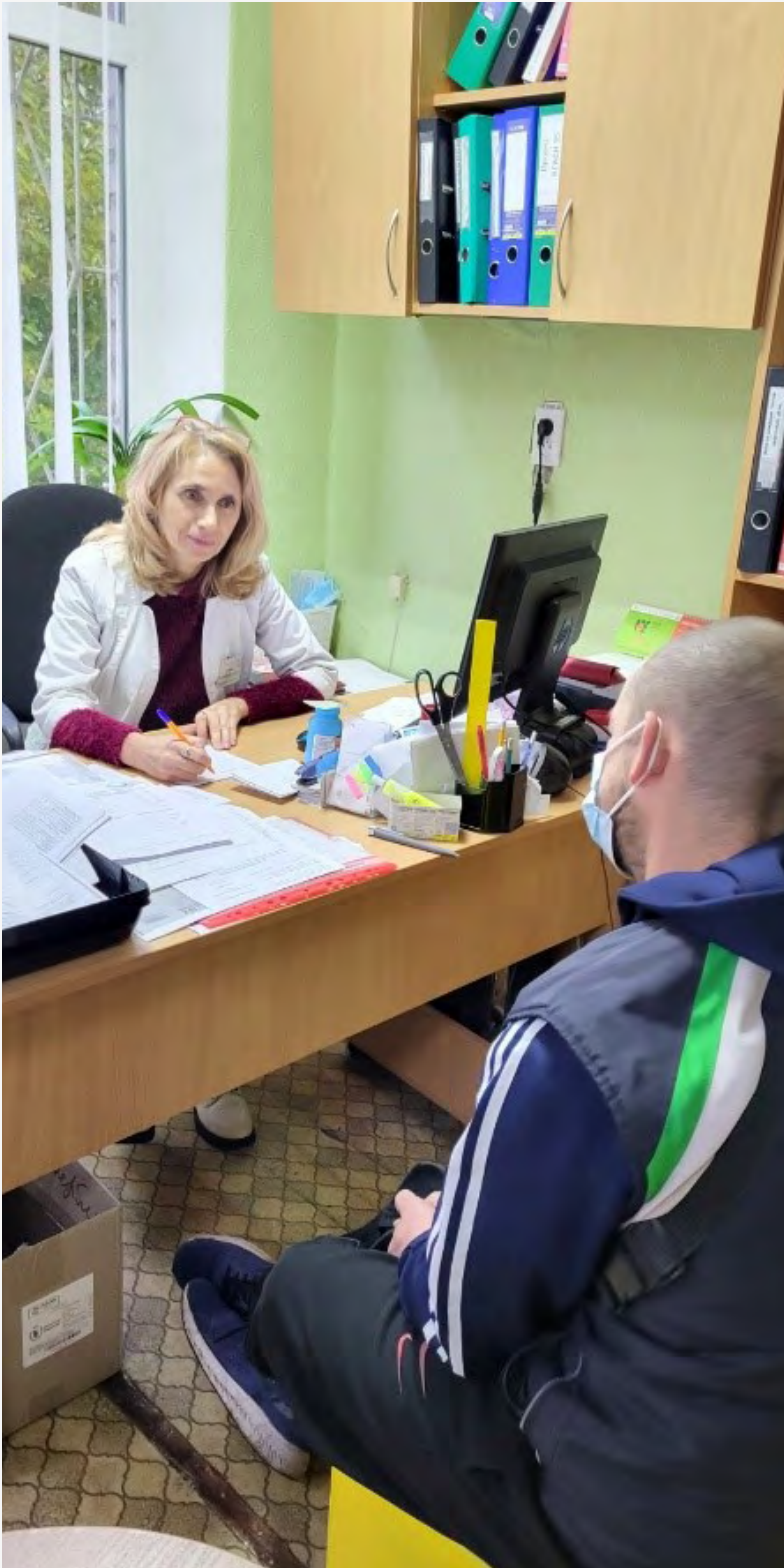
**Over 46,000** individuals received consultations regarding the risks, diagnosis, and prevention of opioid overdose, as well as the proper use of naloxone, which saved many lives.



# 7. ACCESS TO **ANTIRETROVIRAL THERAPY (ART)**



**39% OF ALL NEW ART PATIENTS WERE ENROLLED THROUGH ALLIANCE PROGRAMS.**



- Under the Global Fund project, from January to October 2024, **452 clients were enrolled in case management**, with **98% initiating ART**.
- Under CDC funded project, from January to October 2024, **2,607 clients were enrolled in case management**, with **98% initiating ART**.
- To prevent ART interruptions, **over 24,000 parcels containing ARV medications** were delivered to postal offices or directly to patients' addresses.
- More than **530 patients with advanced stages of HIV** were provided access to costly diagnostic procedures, such as CT/MRI scans, across **24 regions of Ukraine**.
- More than **1,600 transportation trips** were conducted to transfer nearly **56,000 blood samples** from district ART sites to regional or interregional laboratories for analysis.
- The efforts of **340 tracking specialists** were supported across **250 healthcare facilities**, using mobile communication and messengers to follow up with patients who missed scheduled visits to continue ART. Over the first nine months of 2024, nearly **50,000 patients** continued their treatment with the help of this intervention.
- In **16 healthcare facilities across 8 regions of Ukraine**, medical staff worked extended hours to ensure patients could receive medical services at convenient times and avoid treatment interruptions.



# 8. OPIOID AGONIST SUBSTITUTION THERAPY (OAST) AMIDST WAR

Despite the challenges posed by the ongoing war, the Alliance continues to support and expand the OAST program in Ukraine:

- **Program Expansion:** The state-run OAST program is now implemented at 206 sites across 24 regions, serving 21,913 patients.
- **Integrated Services:** 3,600 OAST patients at 92 sites receive social support services, ensuring access to a wide range of integrated services including counseling, diagnosis, and treatment for HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, tuberculosis, and more.
- **Improved Health Outcomes:** 97% of HIV-positive OAST patients are on antiretroviral therapy (ART). ART coverage among HIV-positive patients receiving social support services is 98.6%, significantly higher than among patients without such services (96.4%). Retention rates at 6 months or more are also higher among patients receiving social support services (91.8%) compared to those without (80.9%). The overall retention rate across Ukraine is 83.1%.
- **Infrastructure Development:** Technical support and funding have been provided to repair and equip 35 OAST sites in healthcare facilities and 94 OAST sites through CDC/PEPFAR, including 17 new OAST sites and 5 sites in Ukrainian State Penitentiary Service institutions.
- **Accessibility:** 2,836 transportation services were provided to OAST patients in the third quarter of 2024 to facilitate access to medication.
- **Mobile OAST Clinics:** Mobile OAST clinics in 6 cities (Kyiv, Odesa, Kryvyi Rih, Dnipro, Kirovohrad, and Sumy) have served 461 patients, including 143 HIV-positive individuals.
- **Mother and Child Rooms:** In partnership with NGOs, 5 Mother and Child Rooms and a Crisis Room have been established at OAST sites in Kyiv, Dnipro, Lviv, Odesa, and Kryvyi Rih, providing comprehensive support services to people who use drugs and survivors of violence. Over 346 women have received support, including 31 who started OAST, and 51 individuals who have experienced violence.





## 9. ACCESS TO HEPATITIS C TREATMENT



In 2024, **1,000 people living with HIV** received a comprehensive package of HCV services. The Alliance provided laboratory diagnostics for all patients, and **30% of patients received medication**.

Fourteen partner NGOs in 16 regions of Ukraine were responsible for patient identification, referral, and support. In 2024, activities focused on working with clients – prevention, education, and promoting a healthy lifestyle. Treatment retention was 99.5%, and treatment success was 98%.

An innovative NGO-based HCV treatment project was successfully implemented in 2024 by the Alliance in partnership with the NGO “100% Life, Cherkasy”. The NGO provided a full range of services, from HCV screening and blood sampling for diagnostic tests to transporting biological samples to the laboratory and monitoring treatment outcomes 12 weeks after therapy completion. Social workers worked daily with clients to track the treatment process. A family doctor, invited by the NGO, provided online consultations. As part of the project, certain healthcare facility functions were effectively transferred to the NGO. 100% of project participants were cured of HCV infection.

As part of the OCF CDC project (“Improving the detection of HIV and access to treatment among people who inject drugs in Ukraine”), 75 laboratory diagnostic services were provided to initiate hepatitis C treatment for clients on OAST with HIV-positive status in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Kirovohrad, Odesa, and Dnipropetrovsk regions.



## 10. DIGITAL SOLUTIONS

The Alliance continues to ensure access to quality healthcare and prevention for Ukrainians living with HIV and key populations through the online portal **Help24Telehealth** in partnership with Alliance Consultancies and the Center for Public Health of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine.



The **Help24Telehealth platform's** telemedicine module continues to successfully implement a range of services that support people living with HIV and key populations. Thanks to the platform's digital solutions, members of vulnerable groups have rapid access to online medical care, regardless of their location.

## 11. INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO SUPPORTING CLIENTS AND PATIENTS AMONG INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS AND REFUGEES

Since March 2022 to November 2024, the **#HelpNow** and **#HelpNowHUB** services have received and coordinated **over 40,000 requests** from Ukrainians in more than 50 countries worldwide and from within Ukraine.

Requests from people living with HIV (PLHIV) and representatives of key populations were coordinated by the **#HelpNow** Service, **#HelpNowPL**, **#HelpNowDE**, **#HelpNowClinicalHUB**, as well as partner hubs in Moldova and the Baltic countries, including shelter services and direct social support. The **HelpNowHUB** services assist Ukrainian refugees from key population groups in accessing information and support related to treatment in host countries.



## 12. HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION



**1,316 cases of human rights violations among vulnerable populations at risk for HIV and TB were recorded by the REAct system from January to October 2024.** The highest number of requests came from people living with HIV (30%), patients enrolled in opioid agonist therapy (OAT) (23%), and sex workers (15%). Representatives of all at-risk groups most often encounter barriers to accessing services and assistance (36%), such as medical and social services, and police protection. Cases of emotional abuse (32%) were also common. In 93% of the registered cases, the project provided primary legal assistance to clients.

The hotline for drug addiction and OAT provided 2,257 consultations and processed 193 new strategic cases of rights violations (89% resolved). The viral hepatitis hotline offered 1,285 consultations and opened 76 strategic cases, mainly regarding access to treatment.

## 13. HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

With support from the Elton John AIDS Foundation (EJAF, UK) and AIDSfonds (Netherlands), in 2024, the Alliance regularly financed key community initiatives for vulnerable groups at risk for HIV. Through open calls for proposals, funding was provided for the implementation of 136 micro-projects and 14 medium-sized projects aimed at addressing issues for people who inject drugs, people living with HIV, transgender people, sex workers, former prisoners, and others. The average cost of a micro-project was 180,000 UAH, while the average cost of a medium-sized project was 750,000 UAH. These projects were initiated and implemented by grassroots groups from key populations with technical support from the Alliance team.

Thanks to these projects, 34,000 representatives of key populations, including 7,200 people living with HIV, received:

- humanitarian packages or vouchers for purchasing food, hygiene products, medicines,
- goods for children,
- alternative power sources, etc.





# 14. COVERAGE BY **INTERNATIONAL MEDIA** OF UKRAINE'S RESPONSE TO THE HIV AND TUBERCULOSIS EPIDEMIC DURING THE WAR



## TOGETHER WE ARE STRONG!

Alliance for Public Health expresses admiration and appreciation of the incredible work of all our partners, Network 100% Life, Public Health Center, Ministry of Health of Ukraine, all implementing partners, community and civil society networks, NGO staff and social workers, doctors and nurses! You are amazing!

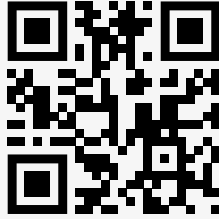
All the great things we have achieved, we have achieved together! Big appreciation to governmental institutions, UN agencies and other international organizations.

We express sincere gratitude for critical support from our donors, your funding is critical for sustaining HIV and TB response in Ukraine as well as to addressing emerging needs caused by war! BIG THANKS to The Global Fund, US Government and PEPFAR, CDC, USAID, US NIDA, Yale University, FRONTLINE AIDS, Christian Aid, International AIDS Society (IAS), Stop TB Partnership/UNOPS, WHO, UNAIDS, FIND, EATG, Aidsfonds, International Renaissance Foundation, The Foundation to Promote Open Society, Elton John AIDS Foundation (EJAF), Irish Emergency Alliance, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, Disasters Emergency Committee, Payoneer, Initiative France, UNITAID, Gilead, Act Church of Sweden (Svenska kyrkan) to all other donors and individuals provided private donations! Your support saves lives!

**GREAT THANKS to Ukrainian Army defending not only Ukraine but also all fundamental principles of peace, freedom, sovereignty and dignity!**



**TO SUPPORT OUR EMERGENCY EFFORTS,  
PLEASE DONATE ANY AMOUNT OF MONEY HERE:**



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