

Georgia Country Coordinating Mechanism

Oversight Committee

Field visits to Gori

23 February, 2018

Sites visited:

1. Centre for Mental Health and Prevention of Addiction - Gori Branch
2. Step to the Future (Harm Reduction Centre)
3. TB Centre in Gori

The purpose of the visits was to discuss the current status of the implementation of HIV and TB programmes and to identify challenges that impede their operations.

Objective of the visits:

1. Collect information from sub and sub-sub recipients about the implementation of GFATM-funded programmes, their performance and operations;
2. Review the challenges in the process of grant implementation and discuss ways of their overcoming.

Methodology:

- ✓ Discussion with the project implementation staff;
- ✓ Conducting interviews with beneficiaries of programmes.

1. Centre for Mental Health and Prevention of Addiction - Gori Branch. Methadone substitution therapy program

Participants:

Tamar Bortsvadze – CCM, OC Chair

Irina Grdzeldze – CCM, Executive Secretary

Natia Khonelidze – CCM, Administrative Assistant

Khatuna Kolotashvili – Centre for Mental Health and Prevention of Addiction

Liana Pitskhelauri - Centre for Mental Health and Prevention of Addiction, Social Worker

Natia Tutskiridze – Centre for Mental Health and Prevention of Addiction, Physician
Narcologist

Irma Gviniashvili - Centre for Mental Health and Prevention of Addiction, Physician
Narcologist

The staff noted that the program is being implemented without interruption. The number of the patients has doubled since July 1, the conditions have been improved. The Center has sufficient stock of drugs. There is no delay in terms of supply of the medicines. The medicine is issued through a special device which is operating without any deficiency.

At the current time approximately 150 patients are receiving substitution therapy.

It is worth to note that the Center used to be located at the premises of Medical Center “Gormedi”, where relatively smaller space was allotted for the program. In the summer of 2017 the center changed its address and has been based on its previous location. The current infrastructure is favorable and gives more opportunities for provision of the patients with adequate services.

The issue of improved geographical accessibility to the program for the residents of Shida Kartli was discussed during the meeting. It was noted that the service is available only in Gori thus expansion of the program to other district centers in order to satisfy the existing demand would be desirable. The intensive work towards opening of service-centers in other towns is on-going.

2. GHRN Service Center “Step to the Future”

Tamar Bortsvadze – CCM, Chair of OC

Irina Grdzeldze – CCM, Executive Secretary

Natia Khonelidze – CCM, Administrative Assistant

Bachana Khutsishvili - GHRN Service Center “Step to the Future”, VCT Consultant

Giorgi Gudadze - GHRN Service Center “Step to the Future”, in charge of storehouse

The meeting addressed the following issues:

Stock-out and interruption – The staff noted that by the time of OC visit the stock of condoms was completely utilized. The staff noted they anticipated replenishment approximately in two weeks. Last summer during approximately of 4 months the interruption of the services was observed due to depletion of the stock and delay in timely replenishment.

The PR clarified that procurement of condoms through relevant mechanism was done timely. Though some shortcomings were observed in the process of its repartition. The latter was improved shortly and GHRN has been already provided with the stock for inner distribution.

It was noted that a few weeks before the OC visit the remaining stock of naloxone was utilized. The staff mentioned that the stock of medicine has not been replenished for last two months. It is notable, that procurement of naloxone has been already done this month by the PR and GHRN will be provided with the medicine within next days.

The stock of syphilis and Hep B rapid tests has been utilized as well. It is notable that the organization was not aware of the timeline of the replenishment.

According to the PR the gradual transitioning from the GF to domestic financing that has already started includes the procurement of test-systems locally, from state budget. Currently the procurement of syphilis tests has been already done and they will be distributed shortly. Hep B tests procured within the GF project will be distributed soon as well.

Comment: The afore-mentioned issues indicate that the stock management of material for prevention services requires improvement. Transition period adds more importance to this issue. The corresponding measures should be set up to avoid interruption in prevention service delivery in the future. First of all it will be appropriate to further improve system of inner distribution and ensure effective management within GHRN. This will allow timely and effective distribution and transferring of the stocks within the organizations under GHRN umbrella. In addition it is necessary from GHRN side to provide PR with timely and practical information taking into account the timelines associated with tender procedure requirements to ensure timely procurement of needed material. It is also important to ensure closer monitoring and supervision from PR side to avoid stock-out.

3. Gori TB Center

Participants:

Tamar Bortsvadze – CCM, Chair of OC

Irina Grdzeldze– CCM, Executive Secretary

Natia Khonelidze – CCM, Administrative Assistant

Manana Gongadze – “Gormedi”, head of phthisiology unit

The meeting addressed the following issues:

Due to decreased number of the patients and patients-based model of financing the program appeared to be deficient. Existing resources are not sufficient for maintaining of the Center.

The concern regarding maintaining of TB services by private owner after expiration of the license period was expressed.

It was noted that since the program tries to reduce utility costs due to shortage of financial resources the proper heating is problematic during winter.

It is worth to note that by the time of OC visit the incentives have not been issued yet. According to the leadership of the Center it would be possible to provide the incentives for two months (January and February) during February. According to GF PIU this problem was related to new requirements from treasury imposed from beginning of the year. The adaptation to the new system required some time. The coordinators were informed in writing on anticipated delays. In the beginning of March all delayed incentives were disbursed.

Gori TB Center collects data from TB centers of Shida Kartli (Kareli, Khashuri, Kaspi) and further reports to Tbilisi TB Center. As noted by the leadership this obligation is not officially vested on the regional centers such Gori TB center. There is a necessity for official regulations of data collection and reporting.

It is desirable to hire a psychologist with the purpose to improve adherence.

It was noted that in the districts of Shida Kartli – Kaspi, Kareli and Khashuri - the existing infrastructure and Human Resources represent problematic issues. It was noted that some private-owned centers has an improper infrastructure (e.g located in basement, where problems with ventilation can exist). The additional efforts are needed to address the insufficient HR and aging of the staff in TB specialized services.