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Towards an integrated approach to HIV/AIDS and mental health



Mental Health and HIV/AIDS

## Research phase 1 and 2

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## **Research phase 1 and 2**

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## **Project partners**

**Research was conducted in 9 countries:**

**Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland,  
Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia**

**National reports prepared by local experts.**





# Research phase 1: Needs identification in the area of mental health and HIV

1. Epidemiological estimates
2. Analysis of the current system of mental health care for people living with HIV/AIDS:
  - a) Analysis of legislation and policies
  - b) Institutional analysis of the health care system with emphasis on mental health care for people living with HIV/AIDS,
3. Assessment of needs, barriers and relevant solutions in mental health care for people living with HIV/AIDS
  - a) exploration of experts' opinions (Delphi Process),
4. Assessment of needs, barriers and relevant solutions in mental health care for people living with HIV/AIDS
  - a) focus group interviews with people living with HIV/AIDS and with staff of the health care facilities.



## Research phase 1: Needs identification in the area of mental health and HIV

### Main results of the study:

1. Introducing standards on mental health care and support in HIV/AIDS treatment.
2. Emphasising the need for interdisciplinary treatment and diagnostic measures.
3. Providing various forms of psychological intervention and addiction therapy for people living with HIV/AIDS
4. Improving access to HIV/AIDS treatment and mental health care for people living in smaller cities, towns and villages and less developed regions.



## Research phase 1: Needs identification in the area of mental health and HIV

### Main results of the study:

5. Improving access to HIV/AIDS treatment and mental health care for people not covered by general health care insurance
6. Establishing a system of systematic evaluation of access to services for people living with HIV/AIDS
7. Establishing a system of training for health care specialists and other professional staff involved in care for people living with HIV/AIDS
8. Establishing a consistent prevention policy programme, including education, information for various social groups and harm reduction policy measures.



## Research phase 2:

### Identification of mental health care services available in facilities providing care for people living with HIV/AIDS

#### Recommendations to increase the effectiveness of these facilities:

- 1. Regional spread:** in several countries improving the regional coverage of facilities for people living with HIV/AIDS is an important issue.
- 2. Working hours:** to increase flexibility of opening hours in order to make facilities accessible outside usual working hours.
- 3. Specialists of mental health care:** increasing the employment of mental health specialists providing care for people living with HIV/AIDS; especially psychiatrists and, depending on countries' needs, professionals specialised in addiction treatment.
- 4. Referral to mental health care:** developing guidelines for facilities in order for them to establish procedures for referral to mental health care services for people living with HIV/AIDS and for people with mental disorders.



## Research phase 2: Identification of mental health care services available in facilities providing care for people living with HIV/AIDS

### Recommendations to increase the effectiveness of these facilities:

**5. Specialised mental health services:** increasing the scope of mental health care services in facilities and developing forms of group therapy.

**6. Support groups:** development of support groups for people living with HIV/AIDS and their families/partners and support groups for other target groups. It is necessary to pay special attention to support groups for people with mental disorders.

**7. Financing:** facilities specialising in care for people living with HIV/AIDS should be provided with **stable funding**, including funding for somatic, mental and social care and support. Special training in applying for grants and other funding, both from national, EU and other sources should be provided.

**8. Networking:** increasing co-operation between facilities working in the area of care for people living with HIV/AIDS and those working in related fields. Supporting projects and programmes provided by more than one facility. Developing system solutions increasing co-operation attitudes instead of competition between facilities working in the area of care for people living with HIV/AIDS and related fields.

## A message to take home

1. Mental health problems proliferate in social climates of fear, stigma and discrimination and, in this context, are inextricably linked to HIV/AIDS.
2. It needs urgent attention from NGO's and governments.
3. Integration of mental health into HIV/AIDS initiatives and programmes in EU-countries presents an opportunity to improve the health of people with HIV/AIDS.

Check our website!

<http://www.mentalhealthhiv.eu>

in English, Polish and Russian language

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Hvala za vašo pozornost.

Thank you for your attention 😊!