



SUPPORT TO UKRAINE FOR DEVELOPING A MODERN PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEM

A project funded by the European Union and implemented by a consortium consisting of GFA Consulting Group GmbH, Hamburg, and the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, Helsinki. The project supports consolidation and empowerment of the Public Health Centre of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine (UPHC) and supports the establishment of a modern blood safety system in Ukraine.

Project newsletter
September 2021



Lyudmyla Chernenko

Acting Director General
of UPHC

The public health system of Ukraine is going through a transformation period. Starting July 1, 2021, the newly established Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDCs) are now operating in the regions. Hence, the Public Health Center (PHC) will become the main expert institution to coordinate the activities of this network in the framework of epidemiological surveillance and hazard response.

We appreciate the international support and cooperation ensuring the capacity strengthening of the healthcare institutions. In particular, the EU funded Project "Support to Ukraine for developing a modern public health system" has been assisting the PHC and the regional PHCs (until recently) with capacity building,

personnel skills development in administrative management, finance, and communications during the last two years. For example, due to the competences and training needs assessment conducted in 2020-2021 by the Project experts, the PHC management set better priorities for the personnel education activities. This resulted into two master classes on strategic management and planning for the PHC, regional PHCs and laboratory centers leadership.

The Project team in cooperation with other international partners, especially the WHO, was engaged into the preparation of the annual training on "Summarising the epidemic season of the incidence of influenza and acute respiratory viral infection 2020-2021" for the regional laboratory centers and observing centers in June 2021. Concurrently, the PHC experts together with the Project

team have a great collaboration on the draft "Procedure for the organisation of epidemiological surveillance of viral hepatitis B and C".

Our main priority is the PHC communication strategy development, and we are happy to inform that the Project experts have already started elaborating this important document.

Besides that, the Project supports the anticipated IT audit of the PHC by involving the specialists in the telecommunication equipment, cyber security, and

information technology in laboratory systems. Hence, with the active Project engagement we expect to define strengths and weaknesses of the current PHC cyber security standards, procedures, and policies, and to adapt them to the international partners requirements.

Even though some structural changes took place in the PHC recently, our fruitful cooperation with the Project goes on, and the joint results keep us motivated for setting the new goals and making ambitious plans for the further public health professionals' development.

Training on influenza and SARS results in 2020-2021 was held for regional laboratory centers and PH institutions in cooperation with the Project and WHO



On June 23-24, the Project experts in cooperation with WHO assisted with the organisation of the training "Summarising the epidemic season of influenza and SARS in 2020-2021 and preparation for the next season in 2021-2022." The training session was attended by 60 representatives of public health institutions from all over Ukraine, which provide sentinel and routine surveillance for influenza and SARS.

Representatives of health care institutions and regional laboratory centers summarised the epidemic season 2020-2021 and calculated the epidemic thresholds and levels of intensity of influenza epidemic activity for their regions. In addition, they discussed the

problematic issues of the epidemiological surveillance and possible ways to solve them in preparation for the 2021-2022 season.

During two training days participants had the opportunity to:

- ✦ familiarise with the activities of the Project "Support to Ukraine in the Development of a Modern Public Health System" and the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Project (PIP Project) in Ukraine;
- ✦ learn about approaches to epidemiological

surveillance of influenza examples in the EU member states;

✦ investigate the methodology and results of the study on the assessment of the severity of influenza using sentinel surveillance data;

✦ look through the draft amendments to the order of the Ministry of Health N°1126 on the organisation of epidemiological surveillance of influenza and acute respiratory viral infections;

✦ calculate the epidemic threshold and intensity levels for their regions for the next epidemic season;

✦ see the results of vaccination of the population against influenza in the 2020-2021 season and the activities of the Partnership Project for the Implementation of Influenza Vaccines (PIVI Project) in Ukraine;

✦ learn about the requirements for SARS surveillance, including COVID-19 as part of routine and sentinel surveillance;

✦ identify the achievements and problematic issues of the activities of health care patrol facilities based on the results of monitoring visits in the 2020-2021 season;

✦ refresh the knowledge on high-quality, complex and timely reporting in the surveillance system and on the correct method of sampling material from patients, packaging and storage of selected samples.

To follow the quarantine measures, it was agreed to arrange the "semi-format" event to maintain sufficient social distance: some participants were physically present, some joined the lecture and practical sessions online.

A master class on "Strategic management and planning" was conducted for the UPHC personnel

The goal of the master class, led by the Project expert Dejan Ostojic on 29-30 of June, was to introduce the participants to the theory, key concepts, and elements of strategic management as well as to highlight on the main points of strategic planning process in health care.

This training activity targeted senior and middle managers of Public Health Centre of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine; senior managers and middle managers of regional Public Health Centres and Laboratory Centres with the aim to explain differences between effective and ineffective management and planning, its core elements, benefits, basic models and framework.

In the healthcare field, the strategic management and planning approaches in the state institutions are crucial for:

✦ analysing the epidemiological predictors (variables that are significantly associated with a particular outcome whether they are beneficial or risk factors), conditions and trends;

✦ analysing the impact of epidemiological predictors, conditions and trends on public health;

✦ becoming more proactive;

✦ learning to think locally, and act globally.

The session on the organisational purpose, stakeholders' analysis, setting the goals, objectives and priorities was also conducted to provide a wider context of the organisational sustainability and good governance.

The CTNA results were presented to the UPHC and other stakeholders on 6th of July

The conference on July 6 was a great opportunity for the PHC representatives to familiarise themselves with the main findings of Capacity and Training Needs Assessment, or CTNA (Human Resources Capacity, Quality Awareness, Administrative and Financial Management, Training Needs and University curricula review) conducted by the Project experts Martin Rusnak, Oksana Artemchuk, Dejan Ostojic, Markiyan Datsyshyn, Tiina Laatikainen and Olaf Horstick.

Following the assessment results, the experts pointed to the strengths and weaknesses of each CTNA component and provided their feedback on how to improve the current functions of the PHC departments.

Some achievements were also highlighted. For example, the quality awareness survey spotted that an online platform has been created and constantly updated with online courses and educational trainings for regional PH professionals. Offline seminars and trainings for regional public health personnel on various aspects of improving quality of public health services are held; and systems for managing the quality of laboratory research meet international standards have been introduced.

On the other hand, to approximate the functions listed in the CTNA survey to work in line with EU legislation,

requirements and practices, several recommendations were introduced.

Among them:

- ✦ To improve vertical and horizontal communication and cooperation across the public health system;
- ✦ To increase involvement of key stakeholders and to strengthen management capacity of public health institutions and staff for effective public health policy making, strategic planning and budget planning;
- ✦ To increase sensitivity and awareness of PH professionals on the need and parameters of a comprehensive conceptual framework in relation to quality and safety;
- ✦ To use relevant policy documents from EU and WHO for the process of quality improvement in public health;
- ✦ To review and strengthen training plans with topics related to development and implementation of public health programs including planning, monitoring, and evaluation.

Therefore, the study might be helpful for the PHC staff capacity building in a long-term perspective.

Conference on “Legal Gap Analysis for the Health Sector in Ukraine” and “Mapping of health sector legislation in Ukraine” findings was held on 13th of July

EU experts of the Project “Support to Ukraine for Developing a Modern Public Health System” Poul Thim and Dmytro Opanaschuk have been analysing the legal framework of Ukraine and developed a set of recommendations. This analysis was supposed to bring the Ukraine health sector legislation closer to the directives of the European Union and to its member states. According to the experts, the Law “Fundamentals of the Legislation of Ukraine on Health Care” could, after revision and relevant amendments, become the new framework law in the field of health care in Ukraine. The analysis results were presented to the Ministry of Health of Ukraine, Public Health center of Ukraine and other Project partners and stakeholders on July 13th.

The Danish legal expert for the EU Project and the assessment co-author Poul Thim summarised the presentation:

“Overall, it is the conclusion that the main functions of the healthcare system of Ukraine related to Governance, Financing and Service Delivery are well covered with the needed legal provisions and so are the sub-functions for operating the health information system, for education

and licensing of medical staff, for establishing the research agenda under ethical guidelines, and for medical products and marketing authorisation. However, it is also observed that most of the sub-functions related to performance/result, quality, the needs of the population and consumers voice are left with very little legal backing. Following this it is recommended MoH of Ukraine to establish a frame Health Law that on the overall level can guide the functioning of all the sub-functions of the health system also aiming at placing more emphasis on prevention/promotion, on increased performance/result, increased quality, and centred around the needs of the populations”.

The legal gap analysis was based on the review of 24 laws of the Constitution of Ukraine and the Law “Fundamentals of Legislation of Ukraine on Health Care”, as well as more than 40 orders and resolutions in the field of health care. The results of this assessment were submitted to the Ministry of Health. Several draft laws or Orders need to be developed to address the relevant amendments to the Law “Fundamentals of the Legislation of Ukraine on Health Care”.

Blood safety system in Ukraine: new Project partner, World blood donor day and the VNRBD campaign preparations



of transfusion services, a blood components stock management system, and development of a reference laboratory component in the blood safety system.

As part of promoting voluntary non-remunerated blood donation (VNRBD) activities, the Project Key expert on blood safety participated in the public event dedicated to the World Blood Donor Day to honor regular voluntary blood donors with participation of the Minister of Health and representative of Verkhovna Rada.

The Project is supporting the campaign and all-Ukrainian movement to promote voluntary non-remunerated blood donation, which was already launched in social media and now the new stage of the campaign is being planned to be implemented soon in cooperation with MOH, PHC, NGOs, Ukrainian celebrities, and other stakeholders.

Starting spring 2021, the newly established state institution "Ukrainian Center for Transplant Coordination" (UTCC), was assigned to be a recipient of the Project technical assistance and one of the main stakeholders in blood safety and national blood transfusion. The UTCC is in charge for the overall coordination for blood safety related activities in Ukraine and the process of introducing amendments to several legal acts that regulate the area of blood transfusion.

To support MOH in building a new blood safety system in Ukraine, the Project experts started cooperation with the UTCC on the following activities:

- ← preparing a regulatory framework, including required EU approximation and support of the institutional framework of the Blood Safety System at national level;
- ← setting up a national registry of donors of blood and blood components and ensuring functions of hemovigilance and reporting;
- ← support the implementation of a quality management system for blood system entities, proper organisation



Dejan Ostojic

Project international
non-key expert in
administrative and
financial management

- To provide recommendations for development of a training curriculum;
- To enable addressing the priority institutional and HR capacity building and training needs through trainings, workshops, seminars and on-site coaching.

The questionnaires were disseminated to each PH institution in all regions (oblasts) in Ukraine, namely, the regional public health centres (rPHCs), regional laboratory centres (rLCs) and transport laboratory centres (TLCs). The survey was conducted online, and the level of response enabled a valid analysis, considering that out of all contacted PH institutions in the regions, only four did not respond.

A RECENT MASTER CLASS ON STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING YOU CONDUCTED WAS DEDICATED TO THE ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE, STAKEHOLDERS' ANALYSIS, SETTING THE GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND PRIORITIES. WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE MASTER CLASS AND WHAT WAS ITS CORE PURPOSE?

So far, two master classes have been organised for senior and middle level managers of the UPHC and regional PHCs and Laboratory Centres in the domain of strategic management and planning. All master classes are designed and tailored in line with the findings and recommendations related to capacity building and training needs. The core purpose is capacity building of senior and middle level managers, which will enable their active participation in the development of public health policies and strategies. This will also enable the managers to lead the strategic planning process within their institutions and translate the public health



YOU COORDINATED THE PART DEDICATED TO FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMPETENCES OF THE CTNA ASSESSMENT OF THE PHC AND REGIONAL PH INSTITUTIONS WITHIN THE PROJECT. WHAT WAS THE GOAL OF THE ASSESSMENT AND HOW MANY PARTICIPANTS WERE ENGAGED IN THE SURVEY?

The rationale for the assessment was to inform policy decision-makers, both, at national and regional level about the current situation in domain of administrative and financial management in the public health system of Ukraine. The assessment was conducted in the period October-December 2020 with an aim to provide an insight into administrative and financial performance of the UPHC and regional PH institutions. The specific objectives were the following:

- To assess the institutional capacity and identify the training needs of public health institutions;
- To define the priority areas for institutional and HR capacity building and training;

Interview

policies and strategies into institutional strategic and operational plans.

WHAT MASTER CLASSES ARE PLANNED TO BE CONDUCTED NEXT? WHAT TOPICS ARE YOU GOING TO COVER? WHO IS THE TARGET AUDIENCE (POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS) OF THE TRAINING EVENTS AND WHAT IS THE GOAL?

The overall objective of master classes is building staff and institutional capacities of PH institutions, which will contribute to sustainability and improvement of overall performance of public health system in Ukraine. The master class planned for October will cover the remaining topics in the areas of strategic management and planning. It will focus on utilisation of a SWOT framework in internal analysis of an organisation, resource considerations, the value chain, competences, capabilities and strategic analysis of competitive advantages. As a logical consequence the following master classes will be dedicated to operational management, financial management, budgeting, costing, HR management, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and marketing. The targeted audience will remain the same, senior and middle-level managers of Public Health Centre of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine, the regional public health institutions, with participation of first-line managers in master classes that elaborate topics relevant for their scope of work and responsibilities (operational management, HR management, M&E, etc.).

YOU HAD RICH BACKGROUND IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND IMPLEMENTING PROGRAMS AND REFORMS ON SOCIAL TOPICS AND PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUES IN ASIA, MIDDLE EAST, AND EUROPE. IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT IS A SUSTAINABLE MODEL FOR FINANCING OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH INSTITUTION – INCLUDING BOTH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FINANCING OPTIONS?

A universal formula for a sustainable financing model does not exist, but there are some important issues that must be considered with regard to financing of, both, a public health system or a PH institution. Key preconditions for sustainability of public

health financing are sustainable socio-economic development and well managed sound public finance management system, which assures efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, accountability, and a timely transfer of public health benefits to the citizens. A government should have a capacity to invest in public health programmes, services, and infrastructure, globally across the country, and to have a capacity to act locally to be able to achieve a sustainable impact in communities. Policy makers must have a clear vision of public health policy, which should be linked with strategies (national, regional, institutional), operational plans and budgets for implementation of that public health policy. Additionally, a robust and comprehensive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework is a must to be able to check and assess the achievements and results.

The health policy should be based on identified public health needs, considering that financial and other resources are limited. Therefore, budget allocations must be based on agreed priorities and public health services that are, both, cost efficient and effective in terms of health outcomes.

Currently, in Ukraine, predominant source of funding for most of the PH institutions is state budget and for a few of them it is regional budget. This level of dependency is not promising for a long-term financial sustainability, especially with regard to public health research and development. A proposed way towards improvement of financial sustainability of Ukrainian PH institutions could be in diversification of revenues with less reliance on the government (central or regional) funding, optimisation of expenditures, improvement of overall resource management and M&E system, as well as strengthening of capacity for project proposals writing and grant management that will enable access to direct funding, either, by the donors or through dedicated budget lines.

WHAT EU REQUIREMENTS MUST UKRAINE MEET TO ESTABLISH SUCH A SUSTAINABLE FINANCIAL MODEL IN PUBLIC HEALTH FIELD?

In pure economic terms, financial sustainability is

Interview

the ability to set up, maintain and expand business operations in short- and long-run. In the EU's policy context, sustainable financing should consider environmental, social and governance factors, and it refers to any form of financing that integrates those criteria into the business or investment decisions for a benefit of, both, individuals, and society.

Financial sustainability in public health is achieved when a public health organisation makes strategic decisions and capital investments to be able to possess sufficient financial resources to meet the priority health needs of the individuals and community at large, regardless of their ability to pay. Therefore, to be able to establish a sustainable financial model and maintain its financial sustainability any public health organisation, for profit or non-for profit, should thoroughly consider current and forecast future financial needs (operating costs and investments) to be

able to maintain a balance of its budget. It also needs to build a comprehensive M&E system and continuously analyse the performance, including periodical review and update of its strategic and operational plans to reflect the changes in public health needs.

The Ukrainian public finance management framework is pretty much in line with EU directives, standards and norms, but implementation of legislation, provisioned rules and procedures must be assured, especially EU directives on accounting and transparency, auditing and financial reporting standards. In line with this in domain of public administration management some core principles of good governance like competence, capacity, accountability, efficiency, effectiveness, participation, transparency, rule of law, ethical conduct, openness to change, sustainability, and sound financial management must be integrated and strictly followed.

Nataliya Korol

Project national expert in non-communicable diseases

features that also were presented in the overview.

An important background for the roadmap for NCDs surveillance system strengthening was reflected in the overview of existing legal and policy framework of NCDs and risk factors monitoring and data collection. Special attention was paid to the draft law 4142 and the last updates from the parliamentary Committee on Public Health, Medical Assistance and Medical Insurance on the preparation for the second reading.

TO GET RELEVANT DATA FOR THE ROADMAP DEVELOPMENT, TOGETHER WITH THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERT MD ERKKI VARTIAINEN, YOU ARE WORKING ON THE UPCOMING SWOT ANALYSIS OF THE EXISTING SYSTEM OF DATA COLLECTION AND STATISTICAL REPORTING ON THE NCDs MORBIDITY, MORTALITY AND THE MAIN RISK FACTORS. WHO ARE THE KEY STAKEHOLDERS TO BE INVOLVED INTO THE SWOT ANALYSIS AND WHY?

The upcoming SWOT analysis will involve different sectors: the Governmental and NGO sector, educational sector, professional associations, experts and scientists, civil society activists. The representatives from UN Country Team, primarily the Country Offices of the World Health Organisation (WHO), United Nations Development Program and World Bank, will be invited as well as the experts of the international projects that are implemented in Ukraine and work on NCDs and risk factors.

Such a wide range of different stakeholders is due to the nosological nature of the NCDs group and the main risk factors that requires a cross-sectoral approach to prevention and control. The monitoring, as one of key components of the NCDs control, including policy planning and advocacy efforts, also requires



ONE OF YOUR MAIN TASKS WITHIN THE PROJECT IS DEVELOPMENT OF THE ROADMAP FOR NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES (NCDs) SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM IN UKRAINE. WHAT ACTIVITIES ARE INCLUDED INSUCH A COMPLEX PROCEDURE?

The preparatory stage for development of the roadmap for the NCDs surveillance system strengthening in Ukraine included an analytical overview of the existing in country system of data collection and statistical reporting on the NCDs mortality and morbidity, and four behavioral risk factors (tobacco use, harmful use of alcohol, unhealthy diet, low physical activity). Along with the overview, the main National Registers, like Cancer Register, Chernobyl Register and occupational health registers were described.

Ukraine is an active participant of the global and European surveys on NCDs risk factors like STEPS, GATS, GYTS, GHPSS, HBSC, ESPAD, ACE. The implementation of these surveys had country specific

Interview

involvement stakeholders from different sectors.

A special role belongs to the Department of Statistics and Analysis of the State Institution "Public Health Center of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine" (PHC) and to the State Institution "Center for Medical Statistics of the Ministry of Health". Both Institutions coordinate the collection of statistical information on health: reports from the regions, research institutes, educational institutions, dispensaries, and specialised medical units.

ANOTHER SIGNIFICANT SCOPE OF WORK IS PREPARATION OF THE OVERVIEW OF EXISTING UKRAINIAN NORMATIVE GUIDELINES RELATED TO PUBLIC HEALTH WITH DEEP INSIGHT IN THOSE RELATED TO NCDs. WHAT OUTPUT IS EXPECTED AFTER THE LIST OF ALL RELEVANT ORDERS AND REGULATIONS WILL BE AVAILABLE?

It is expected that this overview will be focused mainly on two EPHOs (essential public health operations): EPHO2: Monitoring and response to health hazards and emergencies and EPHO 3: Health protection, including environmental occupational, food safety and others. The list of the normative guidelines will be discussed with the representatives of the State Institution "Public Health Center of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine" in terms of compliance with European legal framework and the possibility and timing of harmonisation.

COULD YOU BRIEFLY REFLECT ON THE STATUS ON NCDs SURVEILLANCE IN UKRAINE AND ON THE

MAIN CHALLENGES UKRAINE IS FACING?

The analysis of available information showed that the existing NCDs mortality reporting is an essential source for identification of the NCDs burden in Ukraine. At the same time the NCDs morbidity data was limited due to the introduction a new reporting algorithm. Also, there is a gap on NCDs morbidity data, which could mislead public health planning process especially in the current epidemic situation, where an NCD comorbidity is a risk factor for COVID-19 related complications.

There are two National registers - the National Cancer Registry of Ukraine and the State Chernobyl Register that are recognised nationally and internationally as the monitoring instruments on the national level and in the European region and globally. The National Cancer Registry of Ukraine is a valid source for cancer epidemiology in the European region and the State Chernobyl Register for the radiation risk assessment and management, including a global network on radiation preparedness and environmental security in the region.

The global and European surveys on NCDs risk factors, which have been implemented in Ukraine, provided an important and supportive background for NCDs' prevention and control, including planning the public health policy steps. In addition, the law 4142 adoption and implementation will support the development of a new comprehensive Epidemiological State Service in accordance with best international practices.

The overall project's objective is to support the modernisation and development of a sustainable Public Health System that is able to ensure disease prevention and control standards in line with EU legislation, requirements, and practices. The project shall contribute to strengthening national leadership and capacity in Public Health policy programming and implementation. The project supports the consolidation and empowerment of the newly created Public Health Centre of Ukraine (UPHC) and supports the creation of a modern Blood Safety System in Ukraine.



Finnish institute for health and welfare



Ukraine, Kyiv, 41 Yaroslavska Str.