

Oversight visit in Elbasan

Date of the visit: 18-19 December 2014

Oversight committee members:

Bujana Hoti

Blerta Lika

Present staff from VCT:

Psychologists

Lab specialist

Issues raised and identified:

The work is quite satisfactory. The psychologist states that the department of health of Elbasan has been supportive and there is a good feeling about her job. She has been trained but she thinks that there is a need to know more about the way she can best perform her duties.

She works with all health facilities in the region of Elbasan. Information sessions have been conducted among primary health workers, antenatal clinics and with gynecologists. The number of request for HIV test is increasing and as such there is a need to increase the amount of kits procured by the department. The staff also noted to need to have a lab for confirmation of positive cases. The reference lab is only in Tirana and sometimes there is a need to transport the serum every two days. This is not cost effective and also has emotional cost for the patient.

The cooperation with local authorities is very good. The region of Elbasan is known for positive case management of HIV positive children. But the high stigma and discrimination is still part of the society. There were a lot of activities organized around the WAD 2014 in Elbasan and all partners from national and local level actively participated.

VCT of Elbasan closely cooperates with local NGOs as MMT center, Women's shelter and Roma organizations. Anyhow the psychologist states that there is a stronger need for NGOs to work among them for greater impact.

Issues identified:

The VCT of Elbasan is considered as a very good example. The psychologist and epidemiologist have built very good relationships with all partners, public, private and civil society. The number of testing in this VCT is increased through their very active role on promoting the services they offer.

The support of the department on production of IEC materials has been limited but not missing.

The issue they raised regarding the confirmation of positive cases only in Tirana it is of great value. Elbasan and Tirana are not far but there are other cities that may have more difficulties to reach the capital as fast as Elbasan. Maybe there is a need to establish reference labs in regional hospitals and centers that could serve better and faster to the needs, especially now that promotion of HIV test is taking a priority for the government.

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