



Mitigating the impact of COVID-19 on tuberculosis services

Follow up workshop on the pilot project
“Integration of tuberculosis care and prevention into primary health care in Albania”

31 August 2022, Rogner Hotel, Tirana

Scope and purpose

Consistently with the Albanian National Health Strategy 2016-2020, the Tuberculosis National Strategic Plan 2020-2025 and the current grant “Scaling up and ensuring sustainability of the national response to HIV and TB among key populations” of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund), the Ministry of Health and Social Protection (MOHSP) of Albania decided to pilot the decentralization of TB care and prevention to primary health care (PHC) before a countrywide implementation.

The implementation of the pilot project started in November 2019 in three health centres¹ and is currently ongoing; its review was organized by the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe at the end of 2020 and documented the serious impact of COVID-19 outbreak on the delivery of TB services, with the number of new TB diagnoses/treatments in March-December 2020 halved from what expected. COVID-19, while a confounding factor in reviewing the pilot project, confirmed the relevance of the pilot project and the way to move forward towards its expansion countrywide.

This workshop aims at providing a follow up on the recommendations given by the review and room for further discussion on specific areas of interventions.

Objectives

1. To provide an update on the implementation of the pilot project on TB/PHC integration.
2. To validate the delivery model of TB services adopted by the pilot project.
3. To identify and agree on financial incentives to PHC providers against key performance indicators.
4. To formulate recommendations to MOHSP on the country-wide expansion of the pilot project on TB/PHC integration.

¹Health Centre in Kamëz town (less than 10 Km from Tirana); Health Centre N° 1 in Lushnjë town (about 100 Km from Tirana); Health Centre N° 4 in Tirana.

Outcomes

1. Updated overview of the implementation of the pilot project provided.
2. New delivery model of TB services in Albania agreed among all stakeholders.
3. Financial incentives for PHC providers formulated for adoption by the Compulsory Healthcare Insurance Fund (CHIF).
4. Recommendations given to MOHSP for country-wide expansion of the pilot project on TB/PHC integration.

Modus operandi

The workshop will be organized on 31 August 2022 in Hotel Rogner Europa Park, Tirana (agenda attached). It will start at 09:00 hours, end by 17:00 hours and include two tea/coffee breaks and lunch. Participation could be in presence or through teleconference in Teams with a link provided to the interested participants. Simultaneous interpretation in English and Albanian will be ensured.

It is expected that 35-40 participants will attend the workshop from the MOHSP, CHIF, National Tuberculosis Programme (NTP), The Global Fund, WHO, other stakeholders. The programme includes various topic presentations and discussion in working groups and plenary.