

MODELS OF GOOD PRACTICE INTERVENTIONS TO ENHANCE THE INFECTIOUS DISEASE CARE CASCADE AMONG PEOPLE WHO INJECT DRUGS: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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Background:

Models of good practice (MoGP) aimed at improving community-based testing and increasing linkage to care and adherence to treatment for HBV, HCV, HIV and TB among PWID were collected in 2020 for the update of joint ECDC/EMCDDA guidance on prevention and control of infectious diseases among people who inject drugs (PWID). This qualitative study summarises characteristics of interventions employed within the MoGPs with a proven impact.

Methods:

A MoGP was defined as (a package of) interventions with evidence of effectiveness in certain settings and that are likely replicable in other settings or countries. Geographical coverage included the EU/EEA, the UK, the European Neighbouring Policy area and the Western Balkans. A two-stage selection process of models of practice submissions included a pre-assessment based on a set of quality criteria inspired by European Commission's Criteria to select Best Practices in Health Promotion and Disease Prevention and an appraisal of relevance and sustainability by an expert panel appointed by the two agencies.

Results:

Of 21 submissions, 15 were selected as MoGPs. They emerged from projects implemented in Belarus, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Spain and the UK and from one EU-multi-country project. Peer involvement (12/15) and integrated services (10/15) were most frequently cited interventions that optimised the treatment cascade. Decentralized low-threshold approaches, mainly based on cooperation between drug and specialized healthcare services, were utilized by the majority of MoGPs. Most MoGPs integrated a package of interventions to improve the care cascade and targeted more than one infection.

Conclusion:

This collection identified practice-based evidence to successfully address the care cascade of infections among PWID in real-life settings, in particular for HCV and HIV. When replicating the MoGPs in other settings, consideration should be given to national legal frameworks, characteristics of healthcare and drug services and to the particular needs of PWID populations targeted.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: *See example below:*

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.