

CAHIV'S ACTIVITIES REPORT FOR 2016



1. WORLD AIDS DAY ACTIVITIES

CAHIV organized the campaign and a number of activities from the beginning of November to the end of December 2016 to mark the World AIDS Day and European HIV and hepatitis testing week. Numerous CAHIV's activities were carried out in cooperation with health institutions, civil society organizations and numerous experts. We held a number of preventive and educational activities to inform the public and raise awareness of the public health importance of HIV/AIDS, risks, protective measures and the importance of prevention, timely diagnosis and treatment, showing solidarity to the patients, reducing stigma and discrimination and the protection of sexual and reproductive health.

1.1. Public health education campaign "World AIDS Day – importance of sexual and reproductive health"

Public health education campaign "World AIDS Day – importance of sexual and reproductive health" was conducted by posters and leaflets advertising in the vehicles of public transport, pharmacies, health centers, universities, student dormitories and broadcast videos on digital media and in public cinemas across Croatia, organized by CAHIV, Croatian Institute for Public Health and a number of partners under the auspices of the Ministry of Health, the City of Zagreb and the US Embassy. Also, educational materials were distributed in the partnership with the Croatian Pharmaceutical Society and the Croatian Chamber of Pharmacists through which pharmacists are involved in advising and conveying prevention messages to the citizens in the community. CAHIV distributed informative and educational flyers, brochures, posters and condoms to a number of civil society organizations all over Croatia and other Croatian organizations, institutions and educational institutions that participated in the marking of World AIDS Day, awareness raising and organization of education for young people and the general population (Red Cross City Society Vukovar, Students dorm Maksimir, High School of Nursing Mlinarska, I.Elementary School, High School of Nursing Vinogradska, High School of Nursing Vrapče, Pharmacy and Medical Biochemistry Students Association, NGO Hepatos Rijeka, NGO Ne-ovisnost Osijek, NGO Institut Pula, NGO Help Split, NGO Terra Rijeka, CroMSIC Zagreb, Croatian Red Cross Zagreb, Prison Hospital Zagreb, Croatian Institutes for Public Health, pharmacies throughout Croatia and so on). In total, over 60.000 various kinds of educational materials has been distributed during CAHIV's and partner's activities, which allowed direct reach of the target population of young people at the national level.

1.2. CAHIV & dm (drogerie markt) campaign „Protect yourself and help others“

For the 13th year in a row, the campaign with the primary goal of combating HIV/AIDS in Croatia has been conducted. To mark the World AIDS Day dm in November traditionally allocates 2 kn from the sales of any condoms packaging for donation to the CAHIV.

1.3. Web and mobile application „Sexual health“

CAHIV, in cooperation with the Institute of Public Health and with the support from all relevant institutions launched educational and interactive web page and mobile app „Sexual health“ as inovation to our market aiming to educate primarily young people about different topics of sexual health. From 14th November when we launched it to the Google and iphone market and it has been downloaded 1.432 times.



1.4. European Testing Week

During November and December, and particularly during the European Testing Week from 18th to 25th November of 2016, rapid testing was organized in CheckPoint centre Zagreb managed by CAHIV in cooperation with the Clinic for Infectious Diseases "Dr Fran Mihaljević", the Ministry of Health, the City of Zagreb and the Croatian Red Cross, along with regular testing services using rapid tests for HIV and hepatitis C. During November and December counseling, HIV and tests for HCV have been carried out. In that period, we have discovered anti-HIV positive and no anti-HCV positive (all persons with newly diagnosed HIV/HCV positive status have been referred to the Clinic for Infectious Diseases for further treatment and care).

1.5. World AIDS Day

World AIDS Day was marked on December the 1st at the Petar Preradović Square in Zagreb with setting of thematic tent and an informal gathering with the citizens, especially young people, organized by CAHIV. The Ministry of Health, City of Zagreb and US Embassy sponsored this event which included Croatian Red Cross, Croatian Institute for Public Health, medical students of the International Association of Medical Students CroMSIC and pharmacology students as participants. Free educational and informational leaflets and brochures on HIV / AIDS and sexual health were distributed in the tent, and interested citizens have been informed and consulted on the issue of HIV / AIDS and STDs with experts.

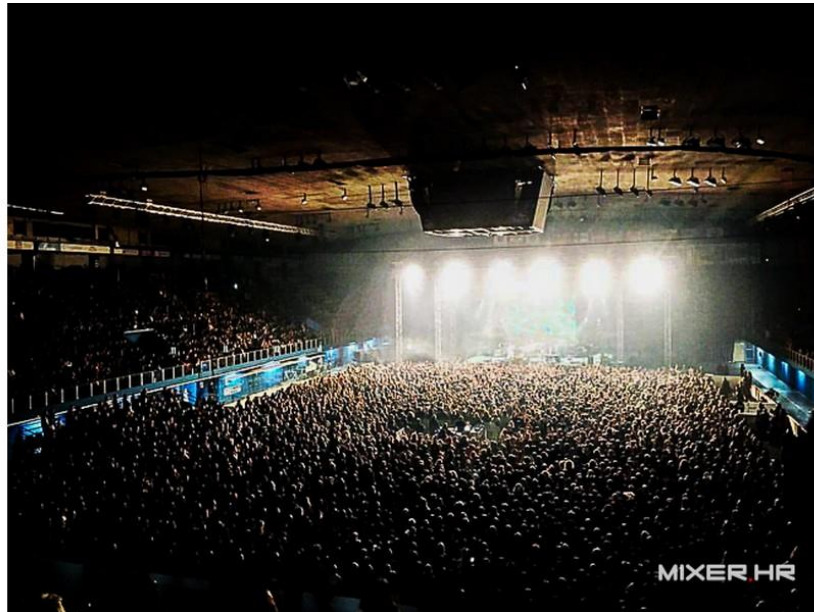
Around 300 students, seven groups of students of second, third and fourth grade secondary medical schools and students of high schools (mainly future nurses) in Zagreb, have been educated about HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, sexually responsible behavior and preserving sexual and reproductive health. The training has been conducted by peer educators, medical students from the association CroMSIC, Croatian Red Cross volunteers and employees of the Croatian Institute for Public Health. Each group filled a quiz before education – a test of knowledge containing 10 questions about HIV / AIDS, prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and responsible sexual behavior and after the lecture students from each group who answered all the questions in the quiz have been awarded. The event was supported by the delegation from the Ministry of Health, Director of the Croatian Institute for Public Health and the , a City of Zagreb's mayor and Department of Health, experts from the Clinic for Infectious Diseases "Dr Fran Mihaljević" and the US Embassy, also accompanied by numerous media.



<http://huhiv.hr/obilježavanje-svjetskog-dana-aids-a/>

1.6. Positive concert - the 12th edition

Educational and informational Positive concert was held on 27th and 28th of November and brought more than 12,000 people. During this event to mark World AIDS day young people have been educated through music, entertainment, sharing educational materials and condoms, through educational messages on a video wall during the concert about responsible sexually behavior, protection and testing in order to increase awareness and consciousness about the issue of HIV/AIDS and the importance of preserving sexual and reproductive health.



<http://huhiv.hr/pozitivan-konzert-2016-dokazao-da-glazba-u-ljudima-izaziva-najljepse-osjecaje/>

1.6. Symposium on the occasion of World AIDS day

At the expert Symposium on the occasion of World AIDS day on December 2nd 2016 in the Clinic for Infectious Diseases "Dr Fran Mihaljević" in Zagreb CAHIV participated in the symposium with the lecture „Community contribution to prevention and treatment of HIV“ with the traditional distribution of professional and educational materials and providing great support to the efforts of the successful suppression of the outbreak, the promotion of innovative technology and excellence in the early detection of infection, use of quality guidelines for treatment and fighting against stigma and discrimination.



<http://huhiv.hr/odrzan-simpozij-u-povodu-dana-aids-a-2016/>

2. CHECKPOINT CENTRE ZAGREB

CheckPoint Zagreb is a center for health and education of young people as part of the Association CAHIV. This is an extremely successful project that would not be possible without the cooperation of the City of Zagreb, City Office of Health, Infectious Diseases Clinic, the Croatian Red Cross and a number of medical experts and partners. The project is implemented according to the highest health standards and under constant expert supervision of the Department for serologic diagnostics of hepatitis and HIV at the Institute of Clinical Microbiology Department of Virology at the University Hospital for Infectious Diseases 'Dr Fran Mihaljević'. The basic characteristics of CheckPoint Zagreb is providing non-institutional services open and accessible to the community, and primarily aimed at young people, students and the population at increased risk of infection from sexually transmitted and blood-borne diseases, according to the world trends of control and prevention, and in the scope of managing the continuing and permanent concern for the health of the citizens of Zagreb, Croatian and wider region. In this way demographic and behavioral data about sexual and risk behavior in the community have been obtained.

Results for 2016:

untill December 1507 people have been educated, 921 people have been tested on HIV and 662 on HCV. There has been 17 new cases of HIV infection and 18 new cases of HCV infection all of them have been referred to the Clinic for infectious diseases. Cumulative, from the beginning of ChcekPoint in 2013 5625 people have been educated, 4473 tested on HIV (48+) and 3632 on HCV (43+).

We emphasize the number of consultations as individual educations in which counsellors and doctors personally devote to each user with the aim of education about sexual and reproductive health and the preservation of health, which is the best prevention of risky behavior and new infections. Significant is the high response of citizens and young people to testing as a result of synergy of the institutional health system and the community, which is a very successful upgrade to health care system modeled on developed countries of Europe and recommended by the WHO and ECDC. We underline the high percentage of persons tested for the first time in their lives, especially those who are at high risk of infection, regardless of the positive or negative test results. We emphasize a high percentage (over 50%) of HIV and HCV reactive people who learned their status by testing for the first time in their life, which shows this is a very successful project of identifying new infections in people who did not know that they are infected and has significant impact on the prevention of new infections due to knowing their own health status and treatment options. All reactive persons were referred for further care and treatment in the Clinic for Infectious Diseases. We also emphasize a high percentage (almost 20%) of sexually transmitted diseases in the society (based on a sample of CheckPoint users), the infection with HPV was most often, then Chlamydia, HSV, ureaplasma and gonorrhea; HSV and chlamydia were the most common pathogens in HIV reactive person.

Summary of CheckPoint's key results is as follows:

- target population is effectively recruited: the total number of HIV tested users proves this is a successful complementary upgrade the health care system - the Clinic for Infectious Diseases and well established existing institutional network of 10 centers within Institutions for public health.
- population is effectively motivated to testing: the high percentage of CheckPoint users tested for the first time.

- population in real danger of becoming infected with HIV and HCV is effectively recruited: on average one of hundred tested positive for HIV and HCV.
- management of preliminary positive people is effective: all persons with positive test results are referred to and received in the Reference Center for confirmation of diagnosis and for further treatment and medical care after providing psychosocial support in Checkpoint Zagreb.

2.1. Outreach program – during October and November we visited 3 NGOs and did outreach. In Pula with NGO Institutu we have tested 20 people (9 HCV+), in Rijeka in NGO Terra 26 (5 HCV+) and in Osijek in NGO Ne-ovisnost 24 (0 HCV+).

3. ACTIVITIES TO MARK WORLD HEPATITIS DAY

In the period from 3rd to 28th July we have marked Viral Hepatitis Awareness Month and for the twelfth year World Hepatitis Day with the aim of informing the public about viral hepatitis and raising awareness about importance of early detection and prevention of these often neglected infectious diseases in cooperation with Clinic for Infectious Diseases „Dr Fran Mihaljevic“ and the Ministry of Health. The slogan was „Stop hepatitis B and C“. This year association CAHIV has joined the marking of the World Hepatitis Day with numerous activities that were available to citizens during July:

3.1. Public campaign “ Stop hepatitis B and C”

During July, we have conducted yet another national public health campaign 'Stop hepatitis B and C'. The campaign aims to raise awareness of viral hepatitis among Croatian citizens, risks and ways of transmission and the possibility of a free, anonymous, reliable and rapid testing.

Conducted activities:

- Implementation of the public health program in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, in vehicles of public transport during July (posters in buses and trams in Zagreb, Osijek, Split, Zadar and Dubrovnik)
- Posters in medical centers and pharmacies throughout Croatia
- Open Days from 20th to 24th July 2015 with the aim of informing and educating citizens about viral hepatitis
- A week of free, anonymous, reliable and rapid hepatitis C testing from saliva during Open Days – 147 persons have been educated in detail about viral hepatitis and tested

3.2 Symposium to mark World Hepatitis Day

On July 28th, 2016, the symposium to mark World Hepatitis Day was held in the large lecture hall of the Clinic for Infectious Diseases 'Dr Fran Mihaljevic' in Zagreb, Mirogojska 8. CAHIV participated in the symposium with the lecture, „Quality of Life in people who live with viral hepatitis“ and with the traditional distribution of professional and educational materials and providing great support to the efforts of the successful suppression of the outbreak, the promotion of innovative technology and excellence in the early detection of infection, use of quality guidelines for treatment and fighting against stigma and discrimination. Symposium was organized, under the auspices of the City of Zagreb, Reference Center for diagnosis and treatment of viral hepatitis, the Croatian Ministry of Health, Department of Infectious Diseases 'Dr. Fran Mihaljevic ', Zagreb, Croatian Medical Association - Croatian Society for Infectious Diseases Section of Viral Hepatitis HDIB,

Croatian National Institute of Public Health (CIPH), the European Liver Patients Association (ELPA) and the Croatian Association for HIV and viral hepatitis (CAHIV).

STOPhepatitis B i C 28.srpnja

95% ljudi u svijetu koji žive s virusnim hepatitisom to ne znaju

Hepatitis B i C najozbiljniji su oblici virusnih hepatitisa
koji se prenose putem zaražene krvi ili zaraženim tekućinama

NEKE SKUPINE LJUDI VIŠE SU U OPASNOSTI OD DRUGIH

Trenutni ste ili bivši korisnik droga (koristili ste tuđe igle i drugi nesterilni pribor za konzumiranje droga)

Tetovirali ste se ili stavili piercing u nesterilnim uvjetima

Imali ste ozljede koje uključuju kontakt s krvlju druge osobe ili ste upotrebljavali tuđi pribor za osobnu higijenu

Zdravstveni ste radnik i imali ste ozljede u kontaktu s kontaminiranim instrumentima

Imali ste višestruke spolne partnere bez upornice zaštite ili spolno prenosive infekcije

Dugotrajni ste i stalni intimni partner osobe koja ima virusni hepatitis

Imate poremećaje jetrenih funkcija neutvrđenog uzroka

TESTIRANI

Ako ste se testirali i znate da imate virusni hepatitis, to Vam može pomoći donijeti važne odluke o Vašem zdravlju

Moguće je dobiti životno važnu rječku i liječenje

Hepatitis B se uspješno liječi, a hepatitis C se može izliječiti

NETESTIRANI

Ako se ne liječi, virusni hepatitis može uzrokovati oštećenja i zatajenje jetre

Virusni hepatitis je #1 uzrok transplantacija jetre u Europi

Virusni hepatitis je vodeći uzrok raka jetre

NC hep.org | www.huhiv.hr | pitaj@huhiv.hr | 0800 448 767

<http://huhiv.hr/stop-hepatitis-b-i-c/>

<http://huhiv.hr/svjetski-dan-hepatitisa-2016-nacionalna-kampanja/>

4. CAHIV Annual Report for 2015

For the 16th year in a row CAHIV proudly released the new edition of the Yearbook for 2015. CAHIV Yearbook has traditionally been intended for health professionals and brings a rich overview of professional articles, news and events in the areas of HIV, hepatitis, other sexually transmitted diseases and the quality of life, an overview of events, projects, and activities of organization CAHIV and interesting news from the region and the world in 2015. CAHIV yearbook is distributed in 2000 copies to more than 190 addresses of clinical institutions and medical professionals throughout Croatia and the all important seminars that bring together health professionals and workers in the social welfare system. CAHIV yearbook has been a part of renowned medical literature for a long time and can be downloaded in electronic form or given by the Association CAHIV per copy (for health workers).



5. The draft of the National Programme for HIV / AIDS 2016-2020

CAHIV and its members have traditionally been part of the National Council of drafting and adoption of the new National Programme for HIV / AIDS for the period 2016th-2020th. During 2015, according to the legal framework and the key documents of the Republic of Croatia and international documents, CAHIV has, together with other participants under the management of the Ministry of Health issued new guidelines and strategies for strengthening prevention activities in the coming period.

6. CAHIV WEB PORTAL, INFO PHONE, ON-LINE SUPPORT AND SOCIAL NETWORKS

In this year CAHIV maintained a high interest when compared to the same period last year, in the level of interest within citizens and young people throughout Croatia and the region about health, information on HIV, hepatitis and other sexually transmitted diseases, education, counseling and testing through a very necessary and high-quality projects intended for health of the citizens.

9.1. CAHIV web site (www.huhiv.hr)

In 2016, there were 146.468 visits to the web site (approximately 12.000 visits per month) and 233.303 pages viewed by 109.153 users, which is more 30% visits than last year. The greatest number of visits in one day (2.408 visits) was registered on December the 1th. The reach on facebook CAHIV page was 10.950, and facebook CheckPoint 4.562 in 2016.

9.2 HIV SOS telephone line (0800 448 767)

Free telephone line is active from 2007 and aimed for helping people who live with infections, their close ones, and also providing information about STDs, treatment and testing. As of 2016 year, campaigns for hepatitis and HIV were extraordinary strong and increase of 100% in received calls is more than enough to show the success of this project and a need for this kind of line. In 2016 we had 285 phone calls till the end of November.

9.3. on-line counselling (pitaj@huhiv.hr)

CAHIV also offers a possibility of online counseling from 2009. Questions are answered in the shortest time possible. After making a new portal we also have increase in communication through this channel. In 2016 we had something over 250 online counselling sessions.

7. NGOs OPEN DAYS 2016

Association CAHIV has been traditionally included in the NGOs Open Days from 23th to 25th May 2016, and presented its content and services to the citizens. Open days made further strengthening of solidarity and confidence in the local communities possible and reminded of the important role that NGOs play in connecting people to solve problems and create networks of mutual support. The activities that CAHIV presented were primarily health care, protection of health and promoting a quality lifestyle: all information about activities and projects of the Association, tips and education about HIV, hepatitis and sexually transmitted diseases, risks and protection of reproductive health, numerous training materials and free HIV and hepatitis C testing from oral fluid with results in 20 minutes.

8. CAHIV AND CHECKPOINT TOGETHER WITH THE CITY OF ZAGREB AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAGREB FAIR.

University of Zagreb Fair has been organized traditionally by the University of Zagreb with the aim that final year high school students, students and all those interested could be informed about the study programs and the admission requirements, student life and accommodation conditions during studying in Zagreb, equipment of individual faculties and about numerous other details that are important to young people when making an important decision about choosing a faculty. As a sponsor of the University of Zagreb Fair, the City of Zagreb actively participated in the program and presented the activities, initiatives and issues related to the protection and promotion of health and psycho-social care of young people. A guide for young people has been presented and distributed for free to the visitors of the Fair, an informative guide about the free services of health facilities for young people in Zagreb which also includes information about CheckPoint center of Zagreb.

This informational guide about free health care services in the City of Zagreb intended for young people Zagreb for the health of young people was presented and CheckPoint center Zagreb, the community based center for anonymous and free testing for HIV and hepatitis C has been included, so CAHIV representatives also participated on the City of Zagreb's booth during the Fair. CheckPoint's services have been conducted in CAHIV's premises and this project is intended primarily for young people with financial and expert support from the City of Zagreb and the City Department of Health. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend such screening testing / screening, and the latest developments indicate precisely on the usefulness of education, counseling and testing in health care settings in the organization of the community.



<http://huhiv.hr/huhiv-i-checkpoint-zajedno-s-gradom-zagrebom-na-smotri-sveucilista-u-zagrebu-2015/>

9. EDUCATION „CRONIC INFECTIOUS DISEASES HIV AND VIRAL HEPATITIS“

CAHIV annually organises courses for experts from different fields, including social workers and other experts involved in social care system.

The fourth course, 'Chronic infectious diseases - HIV and hepatitis viruses' was held in the end of December 2015 in Slavonski Brod in cooperation with the Croatian Association for the Fight against HIV and viral hepatitis (CAHIV), the Croatian Chamber of Social Workers (CCSW) and the Institute of Public Health Brod - Posavina. The main objective of this course is to increase the level of knowledge and sensibility amongst professionals of different professions on the issue of blood-borne diseases (HIV and viral hepatitis) in order to protect the human rights of people who live with those diseases, and reduce discrimination and stigmatization. The course was attended by 57 professionals, primarily social workers.

The course covered following content: prof. Ph. D. Adriana Vince, 'Viral hepatitis - public health problem of our time'; prof. Ph. D. Josip Begovac, 'HIV'; Ph.D. Sunčana Roksandic Vidlička, 'Protecting confidentiality'; Anita Gavranović, bacc. med. tech. 'The standard measures of protection (HIV and viral hepatitis) and care for HIV-positive patients'; Kristina Duvančić, dipl.soc. work., 'Psychosocial work with people affected by chronic infectious diseases.' With these courses CAHIV continues education of health professionals and employees in the social care system over Croatia.

Next course will be held in Zagreb and in the region of Dalmatia in 2017.

<http://huhiv.hr/tecaj-kronicne-zarazne-bolesti-hiv-i-virusni-hepatitisi-2/>

10. SELF-SUPPORT GROUPS

For the 10th year in a row CAHIV organizes self-support groups designed to help people living with HIV and/or viral hepatitis and their family members, where they can help each other by sharing experiences, helping in accepting the disease more easily and improving the quality of life. Groups are meeting twice on a monthly basis. During 2016 they met 22 times, with 212 visits. Also 4 expert lectures were held by the experts from the field of HIV and viral hepatitis.

11. CAHIV CENTRE FOR PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT AT THE CLINIC FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN ZAGREB

The work of the counseling centre is closely related with the patients at the hospital and we provide informing, psychoeducation, counseling services, psychosocial support and assistance to people who live with HIV, viral hepatitis, their close ones and the other people who. In 2016, the counseling services for HIV and viral hepatitis have had a total of 444 users and 619 counseling sessions (169 in personal, 230 by mail and 220 by telephone). Counseling centre has been officially operating since 2011 with the aim of ensuring a comprehensive approach to the treatment of patients. The counseling services of psychologists and social workers are available to users. They, together with the staff from the Clinic for Infectious Diseases achieve providing interdisciplinary approach which is a standard today. Counseling centre also acts as a link between the Clinic and users of Association CAHIV and CheckPoint center of Zagreb services of non-institutional education and testing for HIV and hepatitis C.

12. DISTRIBUTING EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

In 2016 CAHIV has distributed over 120.000 brochures and more than 30.000 free condoms. With the aim of educating people throughout Croatia CAHIV sends educational materials to all centers for testing and counselling, different NGOs.

14. REGIONAL PROJECT „AGEING WITH HIV“

In 2016 we started a regional project *Ageing Positively: Access to Comprehensive Care for Ageing with HIV* as a part of the GoShape grant with cooperation from the Clinic for infectious diseases „Dr Fran Mihaljevic“ and regional NGOs and experts (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Montenegro). Goal of this project is to create a comprehensive handbook that will cover different topics regarding HIV, ageing and ageing with HIV having in mind different needs of people living with HIV, health workers and other people and experts involved in care. Authors are, with the expert supervision from prof. Josip Begovac, PhD, MD and Šime Zekan, MD, people living with HIV from countries involved in the project and experts with different profiles (medical doctors, social workers, psychologists...) from different NGOs. This kind of multidisciplinary approach is necessary to cover all relevant topics. During a workshop in Zagreb in May 2016 we agreed upon the structure of the manual. Promotion of the manual is expected by the end of 2017 when it will be presented on a conference in Zagreb and distributed to patients and experts on all relevant locations throughout the region.

14. SUCCESSFUL SYNERGY OF CAHIV AND HEALTH CARE SYSTEM RESULTS

Over the past fifteen years, the association CAHIV as well as numerous other civil society organizations in the world that work in the field of HIV and AIDS prevention, have built a sophisticated model of HIV / AIDS prevention in society and care for persons living with HIV infection as a chronic disease - one of the most complicated with which the health system is facing today. We still don't have a cure, but thanks to improving therapies that more efficiently suppress the virus with fewer side effects, life expectancy after HIV diagnosis has become almost equal to the lifetime of healthy persons.

However, all medicines of this world will not help without organized and implemented social support in order to ensure better results continuity of health care and welfare. In a number of civil society organizations such as CAHIV, many of our users have expressed concerns and needs to be recognized and to respond, which are not standardly available in health institutions.

We talk to hundreds and thousands of people, helping them with their fears and uncertainties, individually pay attention to each of them, we educate and advise them, provide them with professional psychosocial support, organize support groups, we direct them to the existing system of health care interventions and care for their own health, organize relationship with doctors and care system, we assist them in re-socialization, in reducing drug use and addiction, in reducing risk behaviors and increasing awareness of risk and the use of protection.

We keep them away from the urgent and expensive services as we can, so that we keep them in the care programs, caring for their own health and efforts to maintain health and that people living with HIV are concerned about the regularity of treatment so the disease would not progress. Also, we organize public events and health campaigns in order to influence the

awareness and contribution of the community, we organize the trainings for health professionals, education of future health professionals and a give significant contribution to the reduction of stigma and discrimination in our society.

In this process of upgrading the health system by working directly in the community, we really save significant amounts to the health care system. Number of newly infected with HIV is almost a hundred people a year, who are treated and knowing their health status do not contribute to the further unconscious spread of infection in the society.

If there wasn't proactive working with vulnerable groups in the community, the awareness of their own health status and the need for testing and treatment in case of infection could not be influenced, people would not be tested sufficiently and there would probably be more infected people. Many, including their partners and family, are spared of great suffering. This also slowly but surely leads to considerable savings in the health care system. Therefore, it would be crazy to manage the assets that literally prevent people from becoming infected with HIV and help people living with HIV to stay healthy and productive in the wrong way. No rational person can not argue against creating a stronger integrated health care system in our country as part of the developed countries of Europe and the world.

Therefore, health concerns, reducing the number of undiagnosed, increasing awareness, education and keeping the infection under control are not only the results of the health care system. Without the necessary and useful services and support from civil society organizations in the community, many people living with HIV or any other chronic illness, would not have been aware of their status even today, many would not be aware of the risks for infecting themselves and others, many would have caused serious difficulties for themselves, their families and the health care system in the advanced phase of disease, many just would not go to the doctor if they were seriously ill and were not aware of it.

Fighting against HIV and AIDS in our country is not only a medical solution, it also requires community response and joint efforts from all of us to fight to the end. Key decision-makers need to take long-term investment in strategies that work and deliver results just as the companies measure their results by investment return. Business leaders invest in those areas that provide the most back payments. Strategy of expanded access to health care in combination with meaningful prevention services and community support proved its cost effectiveness.

We believe that our future is continuing doing what we do good which will, in the end, contribute to stopping HIV/AIDS in our country and this kind of prevention and care model could be in use also for persons with the rest of STDs and other chronic conditions.