



## AIHA Country Program Overview: Ukraine

The American International Health Alliance (AIHA) was established in 1992 in close cooperation with USAID and leading representatives of the US healthcare sector to serve as the primary vehicle for mobilizing the volunteer spirit of American healthcare professionals to make significant contributions to the improvement of global health through institutional twinning. AIHA got its start building health system capacity in the countries of the former Soviet Union. Since then, we've established more than 170 peer-based twinning partnerships and other volunteer-driven initiatives in 35 countries spanning Eurasia, Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, and the Caribbean. AIHA has a long history of implementing successful capacity building programs in Ukraine, including the following:

- Currently implementing a 5-year PEPFAR blood safety project funded by CDC to support the implementation of programs improving national safe blood systems and precautions against the medical transmission of HIV (2012-2017)
- Managed 12 USAID-supported healthcare partnerships (1992-2008)
- Managed USAID-supported national project to scale up PMTCT services (2005-2007)
- Served as the prime implementing partner of WHO/Europe's Regional Knowledge Hub for the Care and Treatment of HIV/AIDS in Eurasia (2004-2013; located in Kyiv 2004-2009)

Our work in Ukraine has been supported by USAID, CDC, WHO, GIZ, UNICEF, and the International AIDS Alliance, which was the principle recipient of the Global Fund.

### **AIHA partnerships and initiatives were at the forefront of critical health reform efforts in Ukraine, including in the following technical areas:**

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| • Hospital Strengthening  | • Infection Control and Prevention         |
| • Emergency Medical Services, Disaster Preparedness*              | • Substance Abuse                          |
| • Neonatal Resuscitation*   | • Infection Control & Prevention*          |
| • Nursing Education, Practice, and Leadership                     | • HIV/AIDS Treatment, Care, and Prevention |
| • Women's Health / Women's Wellness Centers                       | • PMTCT                                    |
| • Primary Healthcare (including NCDs, behavioral health, and GBV) | • Knowledge Management                     |
|   | • Evidence-based Practice                  |

\*AIHA Training Centers established as part of a regional network

## Snapshot of Key Accomplishments of AIHA's Programs in Ukraine:

- Series of trainings on blood services quality management and technical operations for local health workers, infrastructure strengthening for the Ministry of Health
- 10 Primary Care or Family Medicine Centers established in Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kyiv, L'viv, Odessa, and Uzhgorod; many tailored services to meet specific needs of local populations, such as student health in Kharkiv and miner's health in Donetsk; some served as clinical training sites
- 7 Women's Wellness Centers established in Kramatorsk, Kyiv (2), L'viv, Odessa, and Uzhgorod; special breast health centers established in Kyiv, L'viv, and Odessa in response to high rates of breast cancer in these cities
- 3 EMS Training Centers established in Donetsk, Kyiv, L'viv
- 6 Neonatal Resuscitation Training Centers in Dnepropetrovsk, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kyiv, L'viv, and Odessa; the training curriculum adopted by the Ministry of Health as the national standard for medical education
- Transfusiology curriculum currently under development in collaboration with the National Medical Academy of Postgraduate Education, activities for harmonization of local policies with EU directives for blood services
- Reduced mother-to-child transmission of HIV by 75 percent at PMTCT pilot sites in high-prevalence oblasts throughout the country
- Odessa WWC pioneered community-based HIV care and support for women living with HIV at a time when the only treatment sites were AIDS Centers; they also established the Southern Ukrainian AIDS Education Center, which was a regional center of excellence in PMTCT



*In February 2015, AIHA signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Ukraine's Ministry of Health to provide a framework for technical assistance to strengthen the country's blood transfusion services through March 2018.*

## Building Capacity to Effectively Diagnose and Manage Non-communicable Diseases in Ukraine and Elsewhere in the Region:

### Cardiovascular Disease

#### *Primary Healthcare Partnerships*

Between 1998 and 2008, AIHA implemented some 30 primary healthcare partnerships. These twinning alliances established more than 70 primary healthcare centers, family medicine centers, and women's wellness center across Eurasia. All of these centers — many of which are still active today — offer cardiovascular screening, treatment, and patient education. Around 15 partnerships in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Ukraine launched "Healthy Heart" or other wellness programs to help patients manage hypertension and avoid heart attack or stroke.

### *L'viv / Detroit Partnership*

From 1993 to 1997, a key objective of this hospital partnership was to improve cardiovascular health through targeted training and technical assistance in cardiology, cardiac surgery, echo-cardiographic evaluation, and surgical treatment of rheumatic heart disease for the L'viv Oblast Clinical Hospital. Together, partners developed and implemented diagnostic criteria for rheumatic fever in keeping with WHO guidelines and established a unique database containing data on all patients treated since 1993 to assist in correct diagnoses and proper decision-making in therapy planning. Other key accomplishments include upgrading the capacity of the hospital's laboratories to WHO standards for the diagnosis of streptococcal disease; establishing a Scientific Advisory Committee to assist with planning and coordinating data collection and analysis related to clinical protocols; and introducing a number of new techniques that improved pre-hospital care for early diagnostics of cardiac pathologies. Results achieved significant reductions in the average length of stay for patients in the cardiac surgery (decreased from 17.2 to 5.6 days with post-operative length of stay reduced from 25 to 12.6 days) and pediatric rheumatology units (decreased from 24.9 to 23.2 days).

### *Minsk Cardiovascular Wellness Center*

Working with the Ministry of Health of Belarus, the Minsk City Health Administration, Minsk Polyclinic No. 36, and with technical support from the New Jersey-based Robert Wood Johnson Health Network, AIHA helped establish the Minsk Cardiovascular Wellness Center to improve cardiovascular health in the Belorussian capital of Minsk. Polyclinic staff received specialized training on cardiovascular screening, early detection, practice management, education methodologies, case management, and program evaluation. The partners developed clinical guidelines and educational tools, as well as case management protocols. Their efforts culminated in the opening of the Cardiovascular Wellness Center in October 2000, which offers integrated cardiovascular disease screening and early detection, education, and counseling services to more than 27,000 people. It was the first facility of its kind in Belarus.

### **AIHA has a long history of partnering with a broad range of health sector stakeholders in Ukraine, including the following clinical care facilities and schools of the health professions:**

- Donetsk Oblast Health Administration
- Kramatorsk Central City Hospital
- Donetsk City Hospital No. 25
- Donetsk City Polyclinic No. 1
- Donetsk Oblast Traumatology Hospital
- Kharkiv Oblast Health Administration
- Kharkiv Student Polyclinic
- Chuguev Rayon Hospital
- Kyiv City Health Administration
- Kyiv Emergency Medical Services Hospital
- Left Bank Center for Maternal & Child Health Care
- Children's Hospital No. 2
- Maternal Hospital No. 6
- Darnitsky District Central Polyclinic
- Darnitsky District Family Medicine Center
- Kyiv Postgraduate Medical Academy
- Kyiv City Blood Center
- Kyiv Oblast Blood Center
- Lavra HIV/AIDS Clinic
- L'viv Emergency Hospital
- L'viv Oblast Blood Center
- L'viv Oblast Health Administration
- L'viv Railway Hospital
- L'viv Perinatal Center
- L'viv City Polyclinic No. 5
- Zhovkva Rayon Hospital
- L'viv Oblast Clinical Hospital
- Odessa Oblast Health Administration
- Odessa Oblast Blood Center
- Odessa Children's Hospital
- Odessa City Council
- Odessa State Medical University
- Odessa Seaport Occupational Polyclinic
- Odessa Family Medicine Clinic
- Odessa Oblast Hospital
- OHMATDIT Children's Hospital
- Rivne Oblast Blood Center
- Rivne Hospital
- Shupik National Medical Academy for Postgraduate Education (NMAPE)
- Zakarpatska Oblast Health Administration
- Zakarpatska Oblast Hospital
- Central Velykoberesnyanska Rayon Hospital

### *Hospital-based Partnerships*

Since 1992, AIHA has established more than 40 hospital-to-hospital twinning partnerships to provide comprehensive technical assistance across a broad range of clinical and operational disciplines. In addition to helping hospitals learn how to better operate in a more market-oriented, patient-driven administrative structure, these partnerships worked to address fundamental health-related issues that were not being effectively dealt with under existing systems. Based on local public health priorities, more than 10 of our hospital partnerships in Bosnia, Croatia, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Russia, Slovakia, Turkmenistan, and Ukraine designated cardiology — and prevention and lifestyle changes to improve outcomes — as a priority.

### *Georgia Community-based Chronic Disease Management Project*

Community level pilot projects focused on developing a proactive screening, prevention, and treatment strategy for cardiovascular diseases and diabetes paired with health education interventions focused on the most common life-style risk factors. The project also focused on strengthening the capacity of primary care institutions and pharmacies in the area.

## **Diabetes**

### *Primary Healthcare Partnerships*

Educating people and introducing them to new concepts, methods, and technologies provides them with the tools they need to make better lifestyle choices and improve their overall wellbeing. When dealing with a chronic illness such as diabetes, this knowledge can mean the difference between an active, productive life and an existence fraught with frequent hospitalizations and constant worry about potentially life-threatening complications. A number of AIHA's primary healthcare partnerships in Armenia, Kazakhstan, and Russia designated diabetes care as a priority for their communities and developed strong treatment and patient education programs to help patients successfully manage their condition.

### *Dubna /La Crosse Partnership*

AIHA's partnerships and programs are driven by the needs of the communities they work to serve. By assessing the unique needs of the population in Dubna, partners determined that diabetes was a significant problem. They responded by creating the Dubna Diabetes Education Center to teach diabetics, their families, and local healthcare providers about a variety of lifestyle choices that can play an important part in the management of this disease. This resulted not only in patients taking a more active role in their own care, but also in radical changes in the attitudes and responsibilities of healthcare providers.

The diabetes management program they created is a fully replicable model that uses a multidisciplinary, wellness-oriented team approach to educate patients in self-management of their disease. It is modeled after a community-based program used by healthcare providers in La Crosse and was adapted by the partners to meet the needs of the local population. Between 1993 and 2005, staff at the Dubna Diabetes Education Center trained more than 2,500 diabetics; 1,100 family members; and 340 medical practitioners. Insulin use declined by 30 percent and average length of hospital stays associated with diabetes-related complications was cut in half, leading to a consequent decrease in healthcare spending and — more importantly — immeasurable improvements in the quality of life for the region's diabetic population. As a result, the Dubna Health Administration reported a savings of more than 188 million rubles and the program has served as a model for national replication under the auspices of the Gore-Chernomyrdin Commission.

### *Russia Diabetes Disease Management Initiative*

In 1993, diabetes affected approximately 7 million people in Russia. Diabetes and its associated complications created enormous suffering, impaired workforce productivity, and placed significant financial burdens on Russia's transitioning healthcare system. These factors prompted the Russian Ministry of Health to designate diabetes as an intervention priority for US-Russia collaboration under the Gore-Chernomyrdin Commission Health Committee. The resulting Russia Diabetes



Disease Management Initiative (1993-1998) was modeled after the community-oriented approach successfully implemented in Dubna, Russia, by AIHA's Dubna/La Crosse partnership.

In addition to cardiovascular disease and diabetes, AIHA and our partners have developed and implemented highly effective programs to combat other non-communicable and behavioral health issues including asthma, mental health, substance abuse, and gender-based violence – largely through our primary healthcare and healthy communities partnerships.

## **Strengthening Local Health System Capacity to Provide Comprehensive Treatment, Care, and Support for PLHIV:**

From 2004 to 2012, AIHA was the prime implementing partner of WHO/Europe's Regional Knowledge Hub for the Care and Treatment of HIV/AIDS in Eurasia. The Knowledge Hub's mandate was to create the human resource capacity necessary to provide care to PLHIV by developing expertise among healthcare professionals, cultivating training capacity so knowledge and skills could be passed on to others, and amassing a body of evidence-based resources and informational materials to support healthcare providers. To do this, AIHA collaborated with international experts and educational institutions throughout the region to develop and provide a series of training workshops and online resources designed to give practitioners the skills necessary to improve HIV-related treatment and care. During this time, AIHA conducted 264 training courses for some 6,500 health and allied professionals from 10 countries, including 2,170 from Ukraine.



*Since the early 2000s, AIHA has been at the forefront of efforts to address HIV/AIDS in Ukraine and elsewhere in Eurasia through various capacity building projects, including twinning partnerships in high-burden cities in Ukraine and Russia, a USAID-funded PMTCT project in Ukraine, and the WHO Knowledge Hub, which provided HIV-related training for health and allied professionals in 10 countries across the region.*