



ENPUD Declares the Need for Change in Drug Policy On World AIDS Day!

The 1st of December is World AIDS Day. The main goal of this large-scale event is to raise awareness of HIV / AIDS and to demonstrate international solidarity in preventing the pandemic in the world.

Using this opportunity, Eurasian Network of People Who Use Drugs (ENPUD) appeals to the governments of all countries and the international community.

People who use inject drugs are still one of the groups most risk for HIV infection and development of AIDS. That is why today ENPUD calls on the governments of Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) to provide and / or to simplify the access to evidence-based methods of HIV / AIDS, namely, opioid substitution therapy (OST) and harm reduction (HR) for people who use drugs. In many countries, the implementation of these methods has led to a significant reduction in the number of new HIV infections, not only among people who inject drugs, but also among the general population. It also improves adherence to antiretroviral therapy. However, there are countries in which OST and harm reduction are not implemented at all, are on the verge of closing or prohibited under the threat of criminal prosecution, in violation of human rights and patient. Many countries are facing or have already faced a scale down of harm reduction services as international funding is reducing and governments do not yet adequately finance these essential services.

Addressing the international community, we call to unite our efforts to provide a meaningful impact on decision-makers, to reverse repressive drug policies that lead only to an artificial marginalization, criminalization, more discrimination and stigma against people who inject drugs (PUD). We propose now to change previous ineffective drug policy to one which will be based on humanity, human rights and scientific approaches to the prevention of drug addiction and other social diseases.

The repressive methods to combat drug trafficking, as a matter of fact, are turning into a struggle with people who use drugs, and do not lead to the desired results, only increasing the risk for people who use drugs making them more vulnerable to HIV, inhibiting their access to services, and significantly affecting their quality of life. In the countries of the Eastern Europe and Central Asia, this vulnerability and limited of access to prevention and treatment services annually causes thousands of new HIV infections, deaths from AIDS and related illnesses among our friends, colleagues, partners and associates.

Members of the Eurasian Network of People Who Use Drugs are ready cooperate in partnerships for reform and building the foundations of a new drug policy. Our leaders and experts are willing to participate in dialogue as consultants in HIV/AIDS and substance abuse, the development and implementation of effective programs that have been proven as a successful practice in different countries.



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