



Building Capacity of Health Professionals of Uzbekistan in Antiretroviral Therapy



Clinical training with a TB-HIV Patient
(Photo: CAPACITY/UZ)

CAPACITY supports health professionals in Uzbekistan to build up their skills on appropriate ARV clinical and drug management practices

“This is the most effective approach to educating health professionals.”

**-Tatyana Slastenova,
City AIDS Center Specialist,
Tashkent, Uzbekistan**

Since the first HIV case was registered in the Uzbekistan in 1987, the medical care for people living with HIV (PLHIV) was limited to symptomatic treatment of opportunistic infections. In order to provide more comprehensive case management the Government of Uzbekistan submitted a proposal to the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) to provide access to antiretroviral treatment (ART) for PLHIV. The proposal was approved by GFATM in January 2004.

In early 2006, ARV drugs became available in the country. In order to apply them appropriately and efficiently and to enable PLHIV to gain access to the treatment, health care professionals needed proper training. The Republican AIDS Center (RAC) and the Program Implementation Unit (PIU) of the GFATM/UZ requested CAPACITY to conduct trainings for health professionals and assist the country to effectively introduce ART using the latest clinical and drug management practices.

The CAPACITY Project, in collaboration with the USAID START Project, organized two-step training activities, in which more than 50 specialists, including nurses, from different health care facilities were trained on theoretical and practical aspects of ART delivery. The trainings used both traditional lecture format and interactive methodologies. The first training, run by the consultants from Ukraine and Kazakhstan, focused on theoretical aspects of ART, including ART goals, national treatment protocols, patient management, general HIV clinical care, counseling and adherence, and the team approach in HIV and AIDS care and treatment.

The second training supported by both CAPACITY and GFATM, who employed experts from the same countries included two issues: clinical and joint-case analysis. The clinical phase, which was held at the Virology Institute and the RAC, allowed participants to make detailed analyses of clinical cases, consultations, and patient examinations. During this part, special attention was paid to ART initiation, identification of appropriate drug regimens, including initial prescription, laboratory evaluation, and management of complications.

The joint-case analysis allowed participants to present clinical cases and explain their method of patient management. As a result, each patient became a case study, for which participants could discuss the case related issues and offer opinions. The trainers facilitated discussions, and at the end of each session, a practical plan of examination and treatment was recommended by the group, thus building team-management skills.

By participation in the trainings, health professionals in Uzbekistan gained appropriate knowledge on how to assess the needs of HIV-positive patients, properly initiate and monitor ART and effectively deal with possible side effects and adherence problems in accordance with the best clinical and drug management practices.

