



# The role of international organizations in the elimination of viral hepatitis in Europe: Achievements, challenges, and the way forward

**Senad Handanagic, MD, MPH**

**Associate Director for Global Health (Acting)**

Division of Viral Hepatitis, CDC, Atlanta, USA

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# Global Health Office at the Division of Viral Hepatitis, CDC

- Current activities in Europe
  - Supporting the HCV Elimination Program in Georgia
  - Supporting the development of the Strategic Plan for HCV and HBV Elimination in Moldova and assisting Moldova in developing a reference laboratory for viral hepatitis

# Global Health Office at the Division of Viral Hepatitis, CDC

- **Vision**
  - Elimination of viral hepatitis as a global public health threat by 2030.
- **Mission**
  - Promote viral hepatitis elimination through developing strategic leadership, collaboration, and innovative approaches.
- **Essential collaborations for achieving the elimination of viral hepatitis by 2030**
  - Strong partnerships between the CDC, WHO, and WHO Collaborating Centers
  - Sustainable local partnerships and cooperation

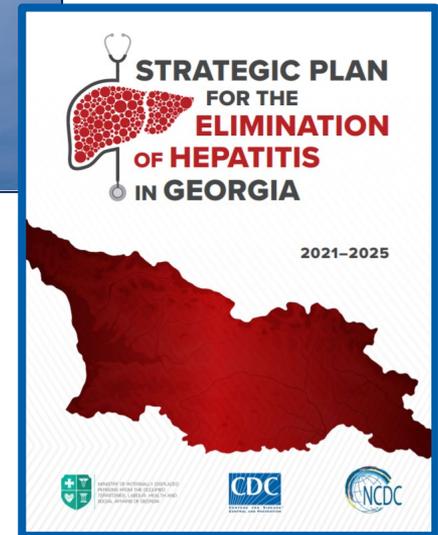
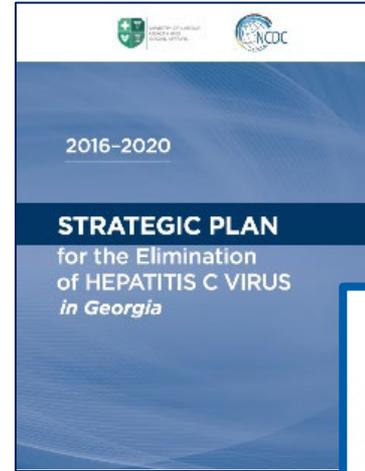
# The success of the Georgian Hepatitis C Elimination Program

- Tested more than 2 million people for hepatitis C
- Treated nearly 80,000 persons infected with HCV
- Treatment success rate close to 100%
- On track to achieve hepatitis C elimination goals by 2030
- Implementing evidence-based interventions
- Establishing a culture of collaboration, sharing, and openness



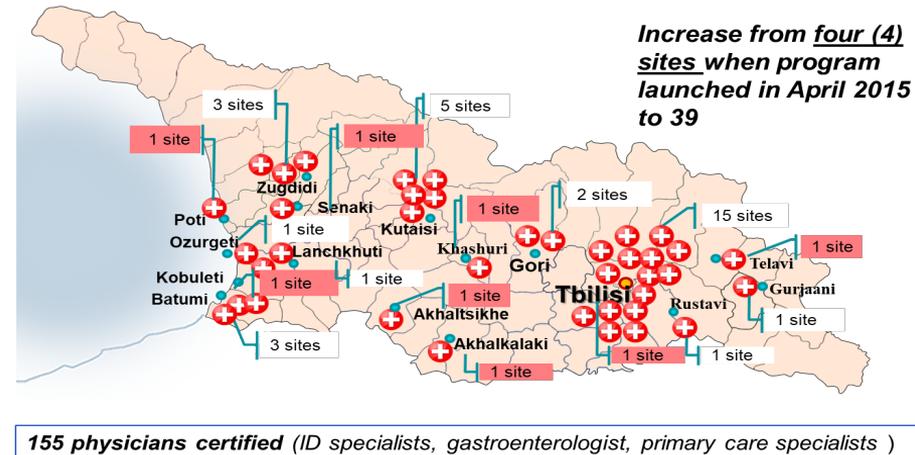
# Lessons to be learned from Georgian Hepatitis C Elimination Program

- Implementing high-quality nationwide serosurveys to estimate the burden of HCV and HBV
- Developing centers of laboratory and clinical excellence
- Utilizing telemedicine and the ECHO model for provider training to expand treatment access in community settings
- Developing Strategic Plans for Viral Hepatitis Elimination



# Lessons to be learned from Georgian Hepatitis C Elimination Program (cont.)

- Establishing regular Technical Advisory Group meetings to promote collaboration between local and international experts
- Integration of different registries and databases to monitor and evaluate the progress of the Elimination Program
- Decentralization of hepatitis C diagnosis and treatment
- Integration of hepatitis C diagnosis and treatment with harm-reduction services



# Ongoing collaboration between CDC, Georgia and other countries – importance of the regional approach

- Planning and implementation of the nationwide serosurvey in Uzbekistan in 2021
- Lugar Center and NCDC are assisting in developing a protocol for a nationwide serosurvey in Kyrgyzstan
- Infectious Diseases, AIDS Hospital Team is working with Kyrgyzstan colleagues in updating their HCV and HBV testing and treatment guidelines
- Providing technical assistance to Moldova to start their HCV and HBV Elimination Programs

# Challenges

- Establishing long-lasting political support for viral hepatitis elimination
- Ensuring sustainable funding for diagnostic and treatment of viral hepatitis
- Motivating countries to develop and approve strategic plans for viral hepatitis elimination (especially countries with low/middle levels of epidemic)
- Underdeveloped and underfunded surveillance systems and low-quality estimates of viral hepatitis burden
- Poor health data infrastructure
- Centralized approach to for diagnosis and treatment of viral hepatitis
- Low awareness of the actual risk for health from HCV and HBV infections; the stigma of viral hepatitis as disease associated to injection drug use

# The way forward

- Provide technical assistance and templates for developing Strategic Plans for VH Elimination
- Promote collaboration among countries in the region that have similar epidemiology and burden of viral hepatitis
- Conduct high-quality studies to estimate the burden of viral hepatitis; invest in the development of sustainable surveillance systems for viral hepatitis
- Provide different funding options for VH elimination programs; offer technical assistance in finding the best funding model for different countries based on their epidemiology and economic status; promote and facilitate public-private partnerships
- Reduce barriers to access to diagnostic and treatment services
- Promote the importance of prevention in VH elimination – especially harm reduction and other services for key populations

# Thank you for your attention.

For more information, contact CDC  
1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)  
TTY: 1-888-232-6348 [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

