



IQ^{hiv}: Improving Quality in HIV Prevention in Europe

Introduction

IQ^{hiv} is an initiative of civil society, government, academic and international organizations investigating quality assurance and quality improvement practices relevant to HIV prevention programs and projects across Europe¹. In 2008, WHO Europe and the Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA) in Germany jointly organised the first Europe-wide conference on quality in HIV prevention in Berlin, under the title *How Do We Know What Works?*. This was the starting point for regular meetings of a core group of interested stakeholders. The group recognises and promotes the benefits of working collaboratively towards its goals, including all stakeholders in the HIV prevention sector.

IQ^{hiv} believes that the widespread use of quality assurance and improvement tools in HIV prevention will:

- Support the inclusion of good practice approaches in multilateral and national strategic and action plans.
- Improve the effectiveness and standing of these approaches in countries where they are already well-established.
- Support their introduction in countries working to strengthen their HIV prevention programs.

Stakeholders represented at the initial conference in Berlin and at the group's symposium at the IAC 2010 in Vienna identified quality as a gap and responded enthusiastically to the prospect of developing tools tailored to HIV prevention.

IQ^{hiv} pursues its mission and objectives based on the following working definitions adapted from the quality field:

- **Quality** is the capacity to achieve legitimate and reasonable goals for positive health outcomes in a manner consistent with current professional knowledge and standards.
- **Quality Assurance** formally monitors the quality of services and activities against standards, including review, problem identification and corrective action.
- **Quality Improvement** formally identifies, implements and evaluates strategies to increase the capacity to fulfil and exceed quality standards.

IQ^{hiv} considers *quality improvement* the most proactive and potentially rewarding component of quality work in the field of HIV prevention.

Mission Statement

Improve the effectiveness of HIV prevention initiatives in Europe by providing tools and technical assistance to implement quality improvement practices.

Objectives

- Promote the routine inclusion of quality improvement practices into HIV prevention across Europe at the project, program and policy levels.

¹ Defined as WHO/EURO Region of 53 Member States



- Disseminate information on quality improvement practices that have been shown to enhance the effectiveness of HIV prevention at the project, program and policy levels.

Strategies

- Develop and promote a core set of principles and standards for quality improvement in HIV prevention.
- Collect, develop, evaluate and disseminate practical models, approaches and tools for quality improvement for use in HIV prevention.
- Catalogue and disseminate information on relevant quality-assurance/improvement training, coaching and other supporting resources with a focus on HIV prevention in the European context.
- Organise training and capacity-building activities to support the uptake of effective models, approaches and tools for quality improvement in HIV prevention.

Key Actions

- Draft, adopt and disseminate a charter of standards and principles for quality improvement in HIV prevention. The process of drafting the charter shall be based on consultations and consensus building among key stakeholders.
- Build a website of approaches, methodologies and tools on quality improvement in HIV prevention.
- Develop an online tool to help HIV prevention programs and projects choose the most appropriate approach for their context.
- Build a network of organizations, trainers, coaches and consultants who can support programs and projects to choose and implement quality improvement.
- Collect input from HIV prevention projects, programs and policies related to their experiences regarding quality improvement and disseminate results, lessons and recommendations.
- Hold an annual meeting to present results of the group's activities and plan future work.
- Develop a general presentation on quality improvement and promote its use in HIV prevention projects, programs and policies across Europe.
- Advocate for the inclusion of quality improvement to improve the effectiveness of HIV prevention programs and projects.
- Promote the publication of scientific articles on quality improvement in HIV prevention.
- Raise funds for the abovementioned activities as well as to provide subsidised support in quality improvement to programs and projects with limited means.

Visit www.IQhiv.org to find out more.

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