

Albania

Aksion Plus

NGO – direct service provider

Tirana, Albania

www.aksionplus.net

SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

The respondent reviewed 25 items of information that the government of Albania reported for the 2013 World Health Organization Global Policy Report on the Prevention and Control of Viral Hepatitis in WHO Member States.

✓ The government information was thought to be accurate for **76.0%** of items.

Survey points marked "accurate":
1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 3.1, 3.4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, 4.10, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5.

✗ The government information was thought to not be accurate for **20.0%** of items.

Survey points marked "not accurate":
2.2, 3.3, 3.5, 4.4 and 4.5.

– The respondent took no position on the government information for **4.0%** of items.

Survey points marked "take no position":
3.2.

Aksion Plus did not provide any comments about survey items.

Statement from Aksion Plus regarding key hepatitis policy issues in Albania:

One of the key issues is to provide treatment for hepatitis B and hepatitis C to drug users and other vulnerable groups outside of the health insurance scheme. For those who are out of the health system, it is impossible to get free treatment.

At the same time, there is not a national strategy for hepatitis B vaccination. In collaboration with the Institute of Public Health, we were able to provide free vaccines for our opioid substitution therapy clients and staff at our centres.

The hepatitis approach is included as a coinfection with HIV/AIDS. National response/law/strategy.

We will organise a workshop with the governmental health structures in order to better address the hepatitis treatment and referral system.

Prisons are also part of this process but the situation seems a bit improved in terms of surveillance and treatment.

There is regular bio-behavioural surveillance conducted with the most vulnerable groups but it is mainly targeting

the capital, Tirana. This practice should be extended to other cities as well. For instance, in the Aksion Plus opioid substitution therapy centre in Korca, a city in the south, half of the clients have hepatitis b and hepatitis C.

We are closely working with the Dutch NGO Correlation Network to address some of the most urgent issues related to the hepatitis threat among vulnerable groups: drug users, Roma individuals and sex workers.