



USAID | KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

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PRESS RELEASE

USAID Supports HIV Prevention through Counseling and Testing

Over Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic – On September 12-13 in Bishkek, and September 15-16 in Osh, the USAID Quality Health Care Project has supported two training sessions on HIV voluntary counseling and testing for 50 health care workers from primary health care facilities and AIDS and Narcology Centers. This training represented one piece in USAID's multifaceted approach to improving access to HIV diagnosis and treatment in the Kyrgyz Republic.

Increasing access to voluntary counseling and testing in Central Asia is an important component of HIV prevention. By increasing knowledge of status among at-risk populations, HIV-positive individuals are more likely to begin treatment at an earlier stage and engage in positive behavior change to reduce the chance of HIV transmission to others.

Populations at high-risk of contracting HIV are often deterred from accessing public health services due to real or perceived stigma, and discrimination by health care workers. In turn, health care workers cite a lack of skills and strategies for communicating with patients who are at risk for HIV, who often have complex social and health problems. This training empowers health care workers with the tools and communication skills needed to identify individuals at risk for HIV and encourage them to undergo counseling and testing in a supportive way, free from stigma and discrimination.

Over the past decade, USAID has worked to prevent the spread of HIV in Central Asia and to improve the quality of care received by people living with HIV. Over the next several years, the USAID Quality Health Care Project will continue to work to improve the health status of Central Asians by building the capacity of public health systems to better meet the needs of vulnerable groups and to improve public health responses to regional health priorities, especially HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis.

The Quality Health Care Project is one of the many assistance projects supported by the American people through USAID. For more information about USAID programs, please visit our web site at: <http://centralasia.usaid.gov/>.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is proud to celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2011. USAID was created in 1961 by President John F. Kennedy and is funded by the American people. Since 1992, USAID has supported local efforts to improve economic growth, governance, and the quality of health and education in Kyrgyzstan.