

Success stories profile

Network of low HIV Prevalence countries of Central and South East Europe (NeLP)

Testing week 2014

In 2014, NeLP took part in European HIV Testing Week (ETW). Their focus was to communicate activities to member groups within each NeLP country, allowing these groups to then implement ETW at a local level. This proved to be a successful approach.

NeLP acted by sharing ETW information with its members, including lessons learnt from ETW 2013. NeLP also encouraged local organisations to get involved in ETW, in particular encouraging the formation of local task forces. Furthermore, NeLP encouraged the translation of ETW materials into various languages as well as asking organisations to report back on which activities they felt had gone well.

Local task forces were formed in 10 of the 18 NeLP countries, these consisted of organisations and healthcare institutions working in the HIV prevention field and were extremely successful. The greatest success was seen when civil society organisations and government healthcare institutions worked together towards a common goal.

The increased number of organisations taking part in 2014 helped to increase the profile of ETW. Although NeLP did not directly provide testing, their member organisations did, and therefore managed to significantly increase testing availability for key populations.

The use of the NeLP Facebook page, as well as the ETW Facebook group, and the NeLP mailing list to distribute information proved to be a successful way of communicating.

Looking ahead

NeLP plans to increase its participation in ETW year on year. **In 2014 there was a 109% increase in participating organisations from NeLP countries, it is hoped that this will continue to increase for 2015.** On top of increased participation, other successes from 2014 will be built upon, for instance; civil society organisations and healthcare institutions working together, as this allows for linkage between care, support, and prevention strategies.

Unfortunately, some NeLP countries did very little in ETW 2014; solutions will hopefully be found to whichever obstacles prevented their involvement in 2014. It is hoped that regional information sharing will motivate other organisations, allow organisations to adapt ideas previously in other countries.

In 2014 the Overcoming Obstacles to Testing (OOTT) program was implemented by NeLP, which advocates cooperation and joint approaches to testing beyond ETW.