UKRAINE’S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM IN URGENT NEED OF CHANGE

Although Ukraine spends a relatively high proportion of its GDP on healthcare in comparison with other countries in the region, key health outcomes are poor and lag far behind European averages. Life expectancy in Ukraine is almost 10 years lower than in EU. Action is urgently needed to avert a collapse of the healthcare system and to reverse the progressive deterioration of Ukrainian citizens’ health status. The Ukrainian government has started an ambitious healthcare reform aimed at strengthening primary healthcare, health promotion and disease prevention, improving the efficiency of healthcare spending and enhancing medical practice. The main objective is to reduce mortality by 10% by 2020.

In Ukraine mortality has steadily decreased in the last decades. Switzerland’s efforts to promote better maternal and child health in Ukraine over the past 18 years have helped to prevent 1 out of 2 deaths of children under 1 year.

Projects funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) have been extremely valuable in advancing, supporting and promoting the new legislation. Switzerland’s initial involvement mainly centred on maternal and child health. After a while, the SDC realised that the country also needed structural reforms. That’s why several of the current projects aim to strengthen the Ukrainian health ministry’s authority and expertise in order to best manage the reforms being undertaken.

Today non-communicable diseases such as cardiovascular diseases and cancer are responsible for 90% of annual deaths in the country. Preventing and controlling these diseases requires greater public awareness of health, less tobacco and alcohol dependence, and better health services.

“Health” is a longstanding priority domain of Swiss cooperation in Ukraine. Swiss support aims at improving the health status of the population. Switzerland is supporting the government in both drawing up and implementing the necessary reforms. A specific priority is the prevention of non-communicable diseases. Promoting healthier lifestyles, along with preventive measures, will help curb diseases such as cancer and diabetes, as well as cardiovascular and respiratory disorders.

In the current health system in Ukraine, inefficient allocation and use of resources and rampant corruption are major killers.

Today 1 out of 2 Swiss francs paid for healthcare treatment is informal or out-of-pocket. This is a major barrier for the poor and vulnerable to access health services and a major driver of inequity.

Refocusing resources, improving efficiency and access to primary healthcare services and to health promotion and disease prevention activities in community settings will help curb diseases such as cancer and diabetes, as well as cardiovascular and respiratory disorders.

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Results

Policy level
strengthened national policies and regulatory framework for promoting healthy lifestyles.

Institutional level
improved quality, efficiency and access to primary health care services and to health promotion and disease prevention activities in community settings.

Beneficiary level
promotion of healthier behaviour, especially among men.

Our approach

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« SWISS AID HAS BEEN CRUCIAL TO REFORMING THE HEALTH SYSTEM IN UKRAINE »

Health Ministry UIYANA SOUPROUNA

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