



HIV treatment access, delivery and uncertainty

A qualitative study in Serbia and in Montenegro

Sarah Bernays Tim Rhodes Ana Prodanović

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Person sitting in cube. Mark Weber/ Getty images.

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Sarah Bernays ¹

Tim Rhodes ¹

Ana Prodanović ²

1 London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, University of London.

2 HIV Prevention Among Vulnerable Populations Initiative,
United Nations Development Programme, Serbia and Montenegro.

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Contents

Authors	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Glossary	vi
Summary of Key Findings	1
Introduction	5
Methods	7
HIV treatment supply	11
Non-HIV related medical care	31
Social impact of HIV	37
Community participation	45
Montenegro	49
Conclusions and Implications	57
References	63

Authors

Sarah Bernays is a researcher at the Centre for Research on Drugs and Health Behaviour at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, University of London. She has been the lead researcher on the People living with HIV/AIDS study in Serbia and in Montenegro. She is an anthropologist. E-mail: sarah.bernays@lshtm.ac.uk

Tim Rhodes is Director of the Centre for Research on Drugs and Health Behaviour at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, University of London. He leads a programme of research focused on the social aspects of HIV/HCV prevention associated with injecting drug use, including in Eastern and South Eastern Europe. His academic background is in qualitative methods and public health sociology. He is Editor of the International Journal of Drug Policy. E-Mail: tim.rhodes@lshtm.ac.uk.

Ana Prodanović is an anthropologist. She is also Research and Evaluation Coordinator of the HIV Prevention for Vulnerable Populations Initiative, at the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), where she has helped implement an array of qualitative, behavioural and epidemiological studies among vulnerable populations. Her research interests are in the field of health and spirituality. E-mail: ana.prodanovic@undp.org

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Glossary

CD4 Cell

Also known as helper T cell or CD4 lymphocyte. A type of infection-fighting white blood cell that carries the CD4 receptor on its surface. CD4 cells coordinate the immune response, signalling other cells in the immune system to perform their special functions. The number of CD4 cells in a sample of blood is an indicator of the health of the immune system. HIV infects and kills CD4 cells, leading to a weakened immune system.

CD4 Cell Count

A measurement of the number of CD4 cells in a sample of blood. The CD4 count is one of the most useful indicators of the health of the immune system and the progression of HIV/AIDS. A CD4 cell count is used by health care providers to determine when to begin, interrupt, or halt anti-HIV therapy; when to give preventive treatment for opportunistic infections; and to measure response to treatment. A normal CD4 cell count is between 500 and 1,400 cells/mm³ of blood, but an individual's CD4 count can vary. In HIV-infected individuals, a CD4 count at or below 200 cells/mm³ is considered an AIDS-defining condition.

Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, established in 2001, is an independent public-private partnership. It is the largest global fund in the health domain, to date (January 2007) it has committed over US\$7 billion in 136 countries. The purpose of the Global Fund is to attract, manage and disburse additional resources to make a sustainable and significant contribution to mitigate the impact caused by HIV, tuberculosis and malaria in countries in need, while contributing to poverty reduction as part of the Millennium Development Goals.

HIV therapy/ HAART (Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy)

The name given to treatment regimens recommended by leading HIV experts to aggressively suppress viral replication and slow the progress of HIV disease. The usual HAART regimen combines three or more different drugs such as two nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors and a protease inhibitor, two NRTIs and a non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor or other combinations. More recently, a new drug has been developed to prevent the virus from entering the cell. These treatment regimens have been shown to reduce the

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