

# OptTEST Newsletter



## Issue No 2 - February 2015

### Horizontal Work Packages

The OptTEST project has now passed month six. This means that several deadlines and milestones have been achieved. For the horizontal Work Packages this means that the [Stakeholder Analysis and Communications Strategy](#) and the [Evaluation Plan](#) have been finalized. Further, a [Publications Protocol](#) has been agreed upon and finalised by [OptTEST Partners](#). All these documents are available on the OptTEST [website](#).

The Partners met at the HepHIV2014 Barcelona conference: *HIV and Viral Hepatitis: Challenges of Timely Testing and Care* in early October 2014. Further, the Steering Committee (composed of all WP leads and Partners) also had a TC in early December 2014 and will convene quarterly to follow the progress of the project with the next TC taking place in March 2015. The next OptTEST annual meeting will take place in May 2015 which the coordinating team is now working on in terms of finding a date and location.

### Core Work Packages

A cross Work Package baseline data collection form has been developed for the core Work Packages 4, 5 and 7. This was distributed in December 2014 via the online data capture system REDCAP.

**Work package 4:** Public Health England (PHE) is coordinating the linkage to HIV care literature review with the EuroHIVEDat project. Collaboration with the European Centre for Disease Control (ECDC) has resulted in obtaining possible measurements of baseline linkage to care data in the seven countries of WP4. PHE and ECDC met in London in January 2015, to discuss cohort surveillance issues ahead of the planned cohort [IWHOD workshop in Sicily](#) (March 2015).

**Work package 5:** is in the process of setting up pilot sites in the United Kingdom, France, Spain, Estonia, Poland, Greece and Czech Republic to test indicator condition guided HIV testing. A two-day meeting was held in Copenhagen in November 2014 to finalise the baseline questionnaire and plan the data collection.

**Work package 6:** Partners from Spain, France and Estonia have started data collection, and the first cost-effectiveness analyses

### What's next for OptTEST?

The planning of the annual meeting has begun and information about date and time will soon be sent out. Further, the next Steering Committee TC will take place on 4 March 2015 at 10.00 AM CET. Meanwhile, the core Work Packages are working on achieving milestones as listed in their work plans.

The next OptTEST newsletter (Issue No 3) will be distributed in late spring 2015 with more updates on OptTEST.

### **Admin TCs, process & Deadlines**

A series of TCs have been held on administration issues and all partners are submitting quarterly budget updates to the main partner that are reviewed and discussed.

The deadline for the third quarterly budget update from all partners is **19 March 2015**.

All WP leads have been asked to provide a one-page **written update** on their activities. This is important to keep everyone up to date including the Commission and the HIV in Europe (HiE) Steering Committee. The deadline for the first written update is **20 February 2015**.

have begun. INSERM has planned a visit to Estonia in March to discuss the extracted data for the cost-effectiveness analyses.

**Work package 7:** Baseline stigma data collection is nearing completion, with the criminalisation scan (regarding HIV exposure, transmission and disclosure) being up to date, as of June 2014. The plans are to create a follow-up cohort to obtain 'barriers to testing' data over the course of the OptTEST project. Once all baseline data is collected, WP7 leads intend to hold a number of TCs with their country networks. Synergies are also being considered with EATG and AIDS Action Europe.

### **OptTEST Shell-Project**

The OptTEST-Shell project was approved by the HiE Steering Committee in Fall 2014. The objective is to build (in tandem) a shell project that compliments the outcomes and deliverables of OptTEST in the countries of Georgia, Belarus and Ukraine, based around three core WPs (4, 5 and 7). The HiE Secretariat is working with WP leads and known sites in these countries.

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OptTEST Main Partner and coordinating team: CHIP, Department of Infectious Diseases and Rheumatology, Section 2100, Finsencentret, Blegdamsvej 9, DK- 2200 Copenhagen, Denmark, Tel: +45 35 45 57 57, Fax: +45 35 45 57 58, e-mail: [hie.rigshospitalet@regionh.dk](mailto:hie.rigshospitalet@regionh.dk)  
Website: <http://www.opttest.eu>

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