

5th HEPATITIS C
TECHNICAL ADVISORY
GROUP
TAG Meeting

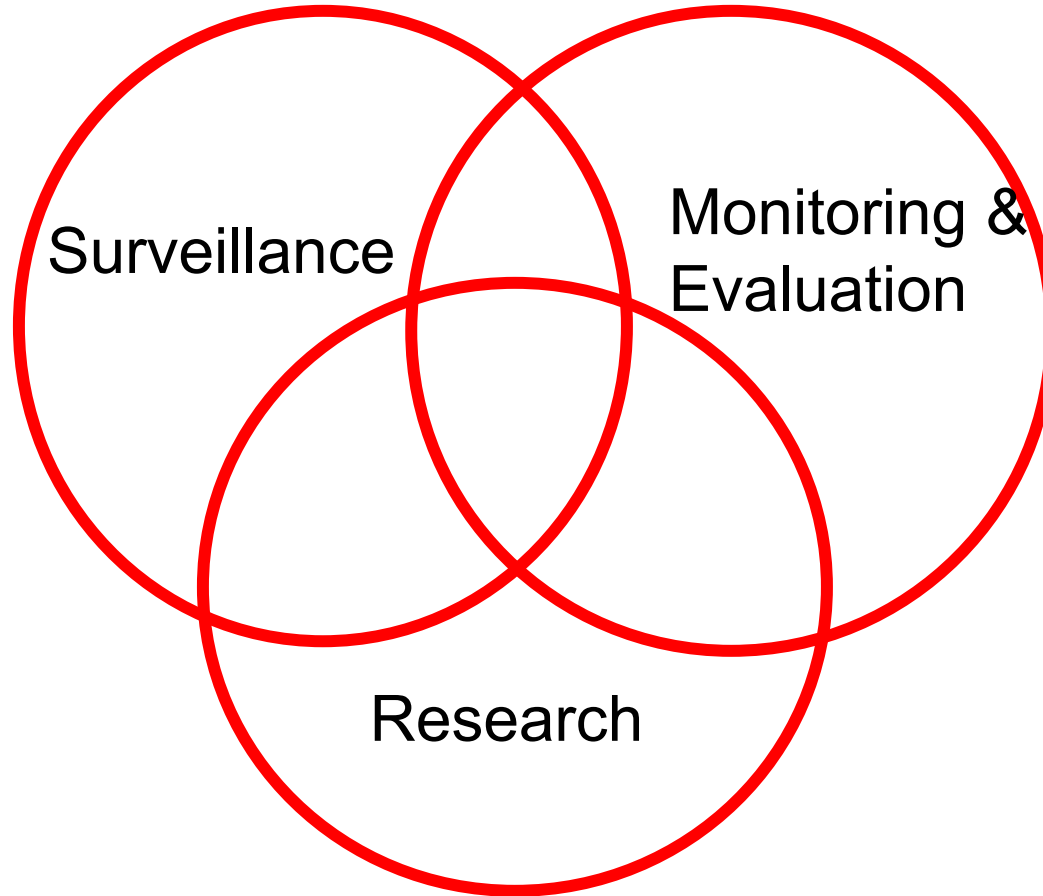
**ACTIVITIES OF THE SCIENTIFIC
COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL
HEPATITIS C ELIMINATION PROGRAM,
2016-2019**

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TEPHINET

Why is research important for hepatitis C elimination programs?

- Monitor progress
- Document lessons learned
 - What worked well
 - What presented challenges
- Document elimination: were the elimination goals actually achieved?

Documenting HCV Elimination



Georgia HCV Elimination: Scientific Committee

- The need for such a committee was to
 - Reduce duplication of efforts
 - Avoid overlapping and contradictory efforts
 - Assist stakeholders in data analysis and dissemination of research findings
 - Obtain resources for conducting priority activities

Georgia HCV Elimination: Scientific Committee

- Established in August, 2016
 - Research agenda development
 - Transparency
 - Coordination
 - Communication
- Initial focus was treatment program, then expanded to epidemiologic and other areas of interest

Georgia HCV Elimination: Scientific Committee

- Co-chaired by the NCDC and CDC representatives
- The committee is composed of
 - Ministry of Health
 - NCDC
 - IDACIRC
 - Clinic “Hepa”
 - Clinic “Neolab”
 - Clinic “Mrcheveli”
 - US CDC

Georgia HCV Elimination: Scientific Committee

- Reviewing and approving study proposals
- Supporting approved proposals
 - Funding
 - IRB review and approvals
 - Study implementation
 - Data collection
 - Data analysis
 - Manuscript writing

Georgia HCV Elimination: Scientific Committee

- Coordination
 - Ministry of Health
 - Clinical Committee
 - International Organizations
- Presentations/Guest lectures

Georgia HCV Elimination: Scientific Committee

- Open to non-Scientific Committee partners (e.g. NGOs, Universities, other)
- Requires Scientific Committee sponsor

**U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Viral Hepatitis
/ Government of Georgia
Concept Proposal Sheet (EXAMPLE)**

1. Type of Proposal:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Treatment data proposal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Serosurvey proposal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Laboratory proposal | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Studies proposal / Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Revision to existing proposal | |

2. Title of project:

Characteristics and Risk Factors for HCV Infection of PWID in Georgia, 2015

3. Data to be used:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> STOP-C | <input type="checkbox"/> C Elimination | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Serosurvey |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Surveillance | <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

Specify subset (if applicable):

Data were restricted to PWID aged 18 and older.

4. Date of proposal (and revision date, if applicable):

November 20, 2016 (original)

5. Anticipated product:

Manuscript/Abstract

6. Target Journal:

The American journal of drug and alcohol abuse

7. Proposing author:

Principle investigator (PI)

8. Proposed writing group:

-PI, Subject Matter Expert, Other contributors (may include members from the scientific committee)

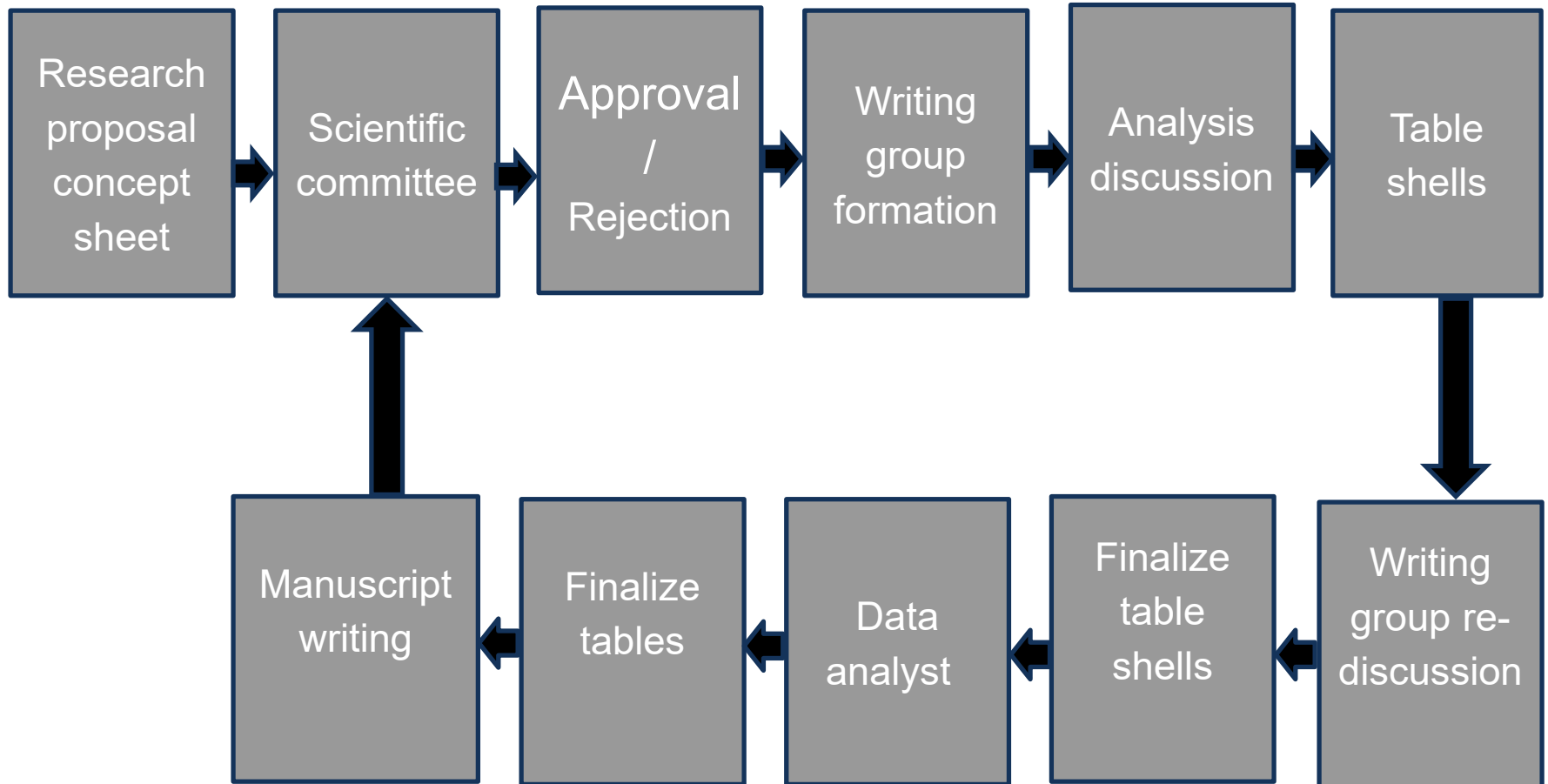
-Must include at least one author from NCDHHS and CDC (responsible parties of the serosurvey)

9. Supervisor/s:

PI

10. Rationale for project:

Flow Diagram – Research Proposal



Progress, August 2016 – October 2019

- Number of proposals
 - Reviewed – 63
 - Approved – 55

- International conferences & Publications
 - Abstracts - 55
 - Manuscripts – 26

Focus Areas

- Projects:
 - Immediate and long-term clinical outcomes
 - Evaluation of diagnostics and treatment delivery models both at specialized and non-specialized HCV care settings
 - Novel approaches to laboratory diagnostics
 - Improving access to care and treatment
 - Surveillance
 - Economic evaluation

Examples

- Assessment of the national hepatitis C elimination program: treatment outcomes and associated factors
- Long-term health outcome among HCV patients with advanced liver fibrosis treated through the HCV elimination program

Examples

- Evaluation of pilot activities to improve HCV screening and linkage to care in Georgia
- Projects on HCV care integration into PHC and HR settings
- Effectiveness of three models of HCV diagnostics in harm reduction: Impact on linkage to care—A pilot project in Georgia

Examples

- Evaluation study of Rapid Diagnostic Tests (RDTs) detecting antibodies against hepatitis C virus
- Evaluation of the diagnostic performance of HCVcAg as test of cure in for hepatitis C among PWID in Georgia
- Evaluation of dried blood spots for HCV RNA testing/sub study: Prospective evaluation of the Genedrive® HCV ID Kit in Georgia

Examples

- Establishing a Georgian PWID cohort study to estimate incidence of HCV infection
- Reinfection survey
- Characterization of HCV recently infected and re-infected cohort among people who inject drugs (PWIDs) at selected harm reduction sites in Georgia using GHOST technology

Examples

- HCV-attributable hepatocellular carcinoma among persons with hepatobiliary cancer diagnoses in Georgia: 2015-2016
- Impact on mortality of hepatitis C virus (HCV) treatment with direct acting anti-viral (DAA) medications, Georgia, 2015-2018

Examples

- Estimation of the cost effectiveness of the HCV treatment program in Georgia
- Learning lessons from Georgia - Using economic modelling to determine optimum screening and linkage-to-treatment strategies for achieving high treatment coverage in Eastern Europe and Central Asia

The Role of Research in Public Health Programs

“The research-policy arena is assumed to be a retail store in which researchers are busy filling shelves of a shop front with a comprehensive set of all possible relevant studies that a decision-maker might some day drop by to purchase.”

Co-production of research knowledge increases

Relevance

Comprehensibility

Likelihood of use of a piece of research

Lomas J. Connecting research and policy. Can J Policy Res. 2000;1:140-144

Do you sometimes feel like this?



“My policy-maker doesn’t understand me!”

Conclusions

- Robust research agenda is critical to achieve elimination
- Coordination of efforts among partners and stakeholders improves efficiency and quality
- Scientific Committee has been key to delivering lessons learned from the Georgia HCV Elimination Program

Acknowledgments

- Ministry of IDPs from the occupied territories, Labor, Health, and Social Affairs of Georgia
- National Center for Disease Control and Public Health of Georgia
- Infectious Diseases, AIDS and Clinical Immunology Research Center, Georgia
- Clinic Neolab, Georgia
- Clinic Mrcheveli, Georgia
- Clinic Hepa, Georgia
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, USA
- TEPHINET, USA
- Partners: FIND, University of Bristol, MDM, Boston University, Emory University, Johns Hopkins University, WHO, Abbott, and others

Questions?

