

Teams of family medicine continue providing services adopted to the latest guidelines of the health authorities with the aim of preventing and controlling COVID-19 infection.

Family physicians attend remote consultation of suspected/confirmed cases with COVID-19, as well as carry out remotely the passive triage in response to phone calls arrived at the HC based on 'COVID-19 triage' card of the National Center of Medical Emergency.

## PROVISION OF CARE FOR CHRONIC PATIENTS



- Family physicians are conducting remote consultations through telephone and other information technology means, checking the health status of chronic patients. In such circumstances, for a better quality of remote consultation, there has been a need for the development and making available to the Family Medicine teams of clinical guidelines adopted for remote consultation.
- The social distancing principles are being applied within healthcare premises
- Medications are being delivered at home for chronic patients over 65 years old in accordance with the guidelines of the Compulsory Health Insurance Fund (a video showing moments of the PHC work in community in Diber region can be found here: <https://youtu.be/GYjcdxbxgALs>)

## HAP RESPONSE IN ASSISTING PHC TEAMS

Health for All Project is working to provide online training for primary health care teams and Local Health Care Units in Diber and Fier regions in order to prevent and control the Corona virus infection. The training aims that the PHC professionals be trained on:



- the importance, selection and proper use of personal protective equipment
- COVID-19 infection prevention measures (hand hygiene, social distancing)
- recognize and distinguish the symptoms of possible infection with COVID-19
- know the definition of the case, conduct the triage and refer the case according to the rules set out by the health authorities
- quickly isolate a suspected case

- HAP has created a dedicated COVID-19 session on its official website with useful information for 'Primary Health Care Professionals' as well as basic information for the 'General Public'. The site contains customized information in Albanian from foreign and national health authorities. For more information, visit <http://covid19.hap.org.al/>.

## TRAINING MATERIALS FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS



The Public Health Institute has published educational/training materials the target of which are health professionals. The materials are distributed through the Local Health Care Units. These materials may also be found at the HAP official website, at the space dedicated to COVID-19 infection, along with all health authorities' decisions regarding the management of the COVID-19 situation from the PHC, with the view of information and implementation by health professionals and the general public.

For updated information on the COVID-19 situation in Albania, visit:

[www.coronavirus.al](http://www.coronavirus.al)

For more information on Health for All Project, visit:

[www.hap.org.al](http://www.hap.org.al)



# PHC challenges while coping with COVID-19: *Testimonials from PHC professionals*



Dr. Reldi Musta is a family doctor and head of Kurjan\* health center, which covers also Mbërs village where 102 families were quarantined. In this village there were 2 cases confirmed with COVID-19 which brought the need to quarantine the entire village to prevent further spread. As a result, the quarantine period ended on April 1 without new COVID-19 cases. *"We checked the health of people, mostly by phone, asking them to measure their temperature twice a day and report potential health problems,"* Dr. Reldi told us – *"Also, we provided the health service at home for patients who needed medication."*

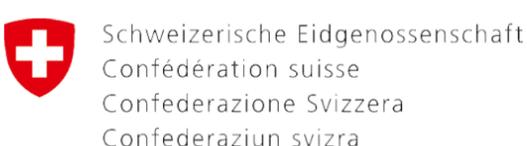
Speaking about the challenges encountered so far, Dr. Reldi mentions the need for direct training of primary health care personnel as the first point of contact with patients. *"We often feel insufficiently protected so we need a lot of training on how to better protect ourselves, colleagues and patients, as well as more personal protective equipment,"* he said, *"We are doing our best to treat our patients locally without having to send them to the hospital, but we need more support. Finally, we urge the citizens to apply the protocols made public in the media as well as communicated by family physicians. For any concerns, please contact your family doctor at any time."*

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\*Kurjan Health Center (Municipality of Roskovec) serves 4766 residents. The health center team (including 2 ambulances) consists of 1 family physician and 7 nurses. Kurjan HC was reconstructed in 2018 by Health for All Project.

As we have had cases of COVID-19 infection in the community we serve, I have seen as specific need any additional training in dealing with suspected COVID-19 patients, as this is a new virus and we have not faced it before. We need concrete training on the measures to be taken in handling these patients, training on the specific clothing used in these cases, the way they are dressed and undressed, because the utmost care should be carried out to not be contaminated by them, however simple the procedure may seem.

-Anisa Shpata, Nurse, HC Patos

Health for All Project is a project of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation that is being implemented by Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute



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