

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultancy on elaboration of a manual for the psychologist operating in primary health care.

Background

Health for All (HAP) is a project of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) of the Swiss Government and is being implemented in Albania since 2015. Its overall goal is that the Albanian population benefits from better health due to improved and inclusive primary health care (PHC). Since 1st April 2023 the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute (Swiss TPH) and the HAP Centre are implementing the Consolidation Phase (Phase 3) of HAP.

The Strategy for the development of primary health care services 2020-2025, Action plan included was approved through the Council of Ministers' decree nr.405, date 20.05.2020. The specific objective nr.1 of policy 7 in this strategy targets "organizing primary health care service integrated with social care at local level". In the frame of implementation of this Strategy and regarding integration of social and health services in primary health care, the following has been achieved: 1) 102 PHC centers have been classified as social-health centers (Statute of Health Center, Order of MoHSP, July 13, 2022, prot.no.2954); 2) new professionals such as *social workers* and *psychologists* have been employed in almost all of the above mentioned centers; 3) the job description of psychologists and social workers in social-health centers is elaborated and is part of the Contract of socio-health Center with the Compulsory Health Insurance Fund- CHCIF Annex A, the Contract of Social-Health Center with CHCIF).

Being aware that primary health care psychology is a growing field that requires specific knowledge and skills for a successful practice, the health authorities and managers of social-health centres, have continuously highlighted the need for support to strengthen capacities of psychologists working in PHC. After several rounds of training on the use of guidelines for management of mental health disorders in PHC held during 2023 and 2024, it has been strongly suggested by participants to support a specific training for psychologists, enabling them to provide better psychological services in the context of primary health care.

The need for psychology to be an integral part of primary health care has become increasingly clear and a literature has developed describing professional roles functioning in primary care settings¹. The features of primary health care, such as: a) the entry gate of first call when a person understands that a health problem exists; b) the health problem is often an undifferentiated bundle of biological and psychosocial issues that are presented as symptoms to a primary care physician or nurse; c) the need for primary care professionals to provide coordinated, comprehensive, bio-

psycho-social care that is continuous over time (Institute of medicine 1996) etc., make primary care an important arena for psychologists to work as part of the health care team. Because most, if not all, health problems have behavioural components, a bio-psycho-social approach to primary care requires sensitivity and skill¹.

In response to these needs, HAP will support the elaboration of a "Manual for the psychologist operating in PHC" as a practical and educational guide for the professionals working in the first line of social-health services. This manual will be used as the main training material for the subsequent continuing education activities to be provided to the psychologists operating in primary health care centres.

In this frame, HAP will mobilize a local consultant (individual or organization) for the elaboration of the "Manual for the psychologist operating in PHC".

Objective of the consultancy

The objective of this consultancy is the elaboration of the "Manual for the psychologist operating in PHC" as a guiding practical and educational tool for psychologists of PHC. The manual will be an instrument for the training of psychologists in PHC enabling them to provide psychological services to patients with emotional and psychological conditions and situations such as depression, anxiety, addictions, chronic stress, adjustment to chronic illness or lack of adherence to medical treatment².

Methodology and approaches

The consultant will:

1. Get familiarized with the following documents:

1.1 Package of health services in Primary Health Care, Decree of Prime Minister nr.101, date 4.02.2015.

1.2 The Strategy for the development of primary health care services 2020-2025, Decree of Prime Minister nr.405, date 20.05.2020.

1.3 Statute of Health Center, Order of MoHSP, July 13, 2022, prot.no.2954

1.4 Job description of Psychologist/Social worker in Primary Health Care Center.

1.5 Guidelines for the management of mental health disorders in PHC, accessible in the link: <https://www.hap.org.al/shendeti-mendor/>

2. Conduct a literature review related to: a) the practice of psychologist in PHC; b) training curricula for the professional psychologist in primary health care.

3. Draft the outline (chapters, structure, clinical cases included) of the manual and through a participatory and inclusive consultation with a group of psychologists operating in PHC will revise and finalize the content/chapters of the Manual.

4. Once finalized and agreed with HAP, the content (chapter structure), the consultant will elaborate the "Manual of the psychologist operating in PHC".

The elaboration of the manual should consider the following:

(a) Primary health care psychologists operate as generalists playing multiple roles in the primary health care team; (b) the education and training of psychologists must be developmental, bio-psycho-social, and systemic in nature; (c) primary health care includes a focus on prevention and wellness; (d) primary health care is collaborative in nature; (e) primary health care attends to the various interpersonal relationships that characterize its context; (f) primary health care psychologists bring to the health care team expertise in behavioral health, developmental psychology, psychopathology, family and system issues, and research skills; and (g) primary health care is practiced in many different settings¹.

The manual will be a practical and educational instrument for the subsequent training of the psychologists enabling them to provide psychological services as a member of family medicine team to patients with emotional and psychological conditions and issues². Therefore the Manual will also have an additional pedagogical guide on how to best use the manual for training purposes.

The chapters should have an indexed bibliography.

The eventual original photos, tables, instruments or educational materials should be original (taken by the Consultant) or taken from open sources. Photos that have copyrights will not be accepted. Alternatively, the consultant can suggest a list of specific photos that can be taken with the support of HAP in a PHC center.

5. Once the draft manual is elaborated, the consultant in collaboration with HAP, will conduct a workshop with selected psychologists operating in PHC centers to review and oversee from their side the structure and the content of the training manual. Consecutively, the consultant will update the respective chapters with the comments and insights arising from the workshop and finalize the manual.

Logistical aspects of the consultancy.

1. During the time of implementation of this consultancy, the Consultant will closely collaborate with the HAP Officer in charge of quality of health care.

2. The documents mentioned under point 1, Methodology and approaches section, will be provided electronically and/or in hard copy to the Consultant by HAP, once the contract is signed.

3. In the process of elaboration of the manual, and depending on the justified needs raised timely by the consultant HAP will:

3.1 reimburse the access to electronic literature, sources and/or the purchase of any really needed book, after a preliminary agreement with HAP;



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3.2 translate, proofread, design and/or format within required time the algorithms and check lists further to the submission by the consultant.

4. HAP will organize the above-mentioned consultation workshops (foreseen with point 3 and 5 under Methodology and Approaches section) and cover all required logistics related expenses.

5. The Consultant will keep HAP informed about any difficulties or any hindrances that may affect or delay the implementation of this consultancy.

6. The "Manual of psychologist operating in PHC" elaborated in the frame of this consultancy is property of HAP and is submitted to SDC rules on intellectual property.

Deliverables:

The consultant should submit to HAP:

The Report of the work done (2-3 pages signed and submitted to HAP electronically and in hard copy), attached with the finalized "Manual of the psychologist operating in PHC" in compliance with the requirements prescribed in these ToRs, in Albanian Language.

Time of the consultancy delivery: May- June 2025

Qualifications for the Consultant: Senior professional Psychologist with an experience of more than 7 years as psychologist.

¹McDaniel, S. H., Belar, C. D., Schroeder, C., Hargrove, D.S., & Freeman, E. L., (2002). A training curriculum for professional psychologists in primary care. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 33(1): 65-72 (Feb 2002). Published by the American Psychological Association (ISSN: 0735-7028)

²Buist-Bouwman, M.A., de Graaf, R., Vollebergh, W.A.M. and Ormel, J. (2005) Comorbidity of physical and mental disorders and the effect on work-loss days. *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica*, 111;436-443, doi:10.1111/j.1600-0447.2005.00513.x hkh