

Positive start of drug-free life style



In February 2015, a forty-four years old Mahmad, once learned about the possibility to get assistance in treatment of drug addiction, requested support from social workers of the “Bridging the Gaps” Project implemented in the city of Kurgan-Tube.

Before referring to the project, Mahmad with 18 years of drug use experience has failed with his repeated attempts to stop using drugs.

"I've heard a lot about methadone, but I did not believe that this medicine could help me, because my "street mates" have told about its side effects. In my communication with social workers from "AIDS Foundation East West-Tajikistan" I received answers to my questions. They told me everything about the OST program and all aspects of methadone intake," says Mahmad.

Before his participation in the methadone substitution treatment program, Mahmad always got problems in his family. *"To be honest, I have not even thought about my family and my three kids. I was just busy thinking how to find my drugs"* Mahmad continues his story. With the support of the project, Mahmad completed a full medical examination free of charge, made necessary tests and was subsequently admitted to the OST program implemented by the National Drug Control Center of the city of Kurgan-Tube.

"After some time of participation in the OST program, I felt positive changes: first I stopped thinking about how and where to get the dose; secondly, I improved relationship with my family and, thirdly, I got a job. I am healthy and in one word everything is fine. Now, when I meet my friends who use drugs I try to explain to them that methadone really helps us", Mahmad concludes his story.

Social workers of AFEW-Tajikistan continue to support Mahmad at the most difficult initial stage of his sober life - at the stage of forging of social ties, independent decision-making, household keeping and re-integration into the new living conditions without the use of illegal drugs. In his turn, Mahmad provides voluntary assistance in raising of awareness of other drug users about the services of the “Bridging the Gaps” Project.

Note: Project: “Bridging the Gaps”- health and rights of the key population funded by the MoFA of the Netherlands implemented by Khatlon office of the Public organization “AFEW-Tajikistan”. As part of the project, representation office offers people who use drugs or people living with HIV social support services as well as assistance at the beginning of the treatment and adherence to it. Only for the first six month of 2016 – 16 drug users in the city of Kurgan-Tube received assistance of the Representation office in passing through the necessary examinations and test and have been enrolled into the OST program.

For detailed information about the project, please visit us on: www.hivgaps.org