

Presentation of the Belgian PrEP Network

GERT SCHEERDER (ITM)

BREACH SPRING MEETING, 7 MAY 2022



From PrEP Taskforce to Belgian PrEP Network

■ PrEP Taskforce

- Installed in 2017 to guide the start-up of PrEP
 - Sudden decision, many 'tasks'
 - Came from BREACH Public Health Working Group
- ⇒ *Not a formal structure (like MC), but an informal network*

■ Belgian PrEP Network

- Renewal (Oct. 2021) after Covid-19 standstill
- Context of PrEP has changed a lot
- Expand to other actors in PrEP

Aims

- Share experiences from practice: good practices, common issues, needs
- Share research ideas and findings, stimulate collaboration
- Prepare policy: identify and advocate for common issues
 - in collaboration with the HIV Monitoring Committee

Members

- Currently 49 members, actively involved in PrEP
- HRCs, CBOs, researchers, public health institutions, ...
- Coordination team:
 - Marie Laga (ITM)
 - Sandra Van den Eynde (Sensoa)
 - Jessika Deblonde (Sciensano)
 - Stephen Barris (ExAequo)
 - Simon Englebert (Centre S)
 - Trésors Kouadio (Plateforme)
 - Thijs Reyniers (ITM)
 - Gert Scheerder (ITM)

Start-up Working groups

■ 4 pending issues

Access to PrEP
for vulnerable groups

Collaborative PrEP care
the role of GPs, nurses,
CBOs, pharmacists, ...

Guidelines on PrEP care
renewal

Injectable PrEP
introduction in Belgium

■ Aims

- Work towards specific output (position paper, policy brief, ...)
=> To be used for advocacy (in collaboration with MC)

Working group 1: Access to PrEP for vulnerable groups



■ Working method

- Proposal PrEP for sex workers can be starting point
- Map other groups with difficult access
- Map structural barriers to PrEP
- Collect models of good practice in other countries

■ Specific aims

- Guidance/tools for care providers
- Towards a uniform approach of urgent medical care ?

Working group 1: Access to PrEP for vulnerable groups



■ Participants

■ Lead

- Christiana Nöstlinger (ITM)
- Heleen Van Mieghem (ITM)

■ PrEP Network members

- Stephen Barris (ExAequo)
- Fabian Colle (Alias)
- Thomas Pierard (FLCPF)
- Lazare Manirankunda (HIV-SAM)
- Sandra Abetsets (Centre S)
- Simon Englebert (Centre S)
- Trésors Kouadio (PPS)
- Ella Van Landeghem (ITM)
- Jessika Deblonde (Sciensano)
- Gert Scheerder (ITM)

Working group 2: Collaborative PrEP care



■ Specific aims and content

- Explore the role of GPs, nurses, CBOs, pharmacists
- How to organize collaborative PrEP care

■ Working method

- Start with evidence
 - PROMISE studies
 - Experiences in France
- Collect opinion of different stakeholders
- Develop position paper

Working group 2: Collaborative PrEP care



■ Participants

■ Lead: Gert Scheerder (ITM)

■ PrEP Network members

- Jean-Christophe Goffard (HRC Erasme)
- Anne De Vleeschouwer (HRC Erasme)
- Eric Florence (HRC Antwerp)
- Jef Vanhamel (ITM)
- Edwinne Deprez (Centre S)
- Marc Sergeant (Sensoa)
- Stephen Barris (ExAequo)
- Fabian Colle (Alias)
- Thomas Pierard (FLCPF)
- Jessika Deblonde (Sciensano)

■ external experts

- Thomas André (CHU St.Pierre)
- Dirk Avonts (Domus Medica)
- Eline Verellen (Huisarts Nu)
- Georges Verpraet (KAVA)

Working group 3: Guidelines on PrEP care



■ Background

- Existing guidelines are outdated
- Differences among guidelines (used by HRCs)

Use of Pre Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) : Belgian guidelines

Henrard et al., 2017

Introduction:

Since 2010, pre exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) has proved its efficiency as a novel prevention tool through several studies all over the world. IPREX study (1) have shown for the first time that the use of PrEP among MSM reduced significantly the level of HIV transmission (44% compared to the placebo group). Then randomized controlled trial, such as IPERGAY(2) and PROUD (3)

Background

- Differences among HRCs in **content** of PrEP care
 - Timing of PrEP initiation
 - STI screening policy
 - HPV vaccination & proctology
 - PrEP counseling
 - Mental health and substance use

Working group 3: Guidelines on PrEP care



■ Working method

■ Gather evidence

- Study in HRCs by Jef Vanhamel
- Collect guidelines used in HRCs / other countries
- Compare guidelines, list differences

■ Build consensus

- Gather opinions of stakeholders about differences
- Develop proposal
- Feedback from PrEP Network

Working group 3: Guidelines on PrEP care



■ Participants

■ Lead: TBD

■ PrEP Network members

- Sophie Henrard (HRC Erasme)
- Jean-Christophe Goffard (HRC Erasme)
- Agnes Libois (CHU St.Pierre)
- Jens Van Praet (HRC Brugge)
- Eric Florence (HRC Antwerpen)
- Anne Vincent (UCL Saint-Luc)
- Anne-Sophie Sauvage (CHU Liège)
- Annelies Meuwissen (UZ Brussel)
- Gil Verschelden (UZ Brussel)
- Jef Vanhamel (ITM)
- Gert Scheerder (ITM)

Working group 4: Injectable PrEP



Long-acting
injectable

■ Specific aims and content

- Follow-up new developments
- Feedback on FWO project about injectable PrEP (ITM)
- Prepare introduction in Belgium
- Answer pending questions

Working group 4: Injectable PrEP



Long-acting
injectable

■ Participants

- Lead: Thijs Reyniers (ITM)
- PrEP Network members
 - Sarah Demart (Observatoire)
 - Charlotte Martin (CHU St.Pierre)
 - Thomas Dubru (Centre S)
 - Gert Scheerder (ITM)
- Will start in October

Next steps

- First meetings in May
- First results by end 2022

- Thanks to all involved!
- Contact: gscheerder@itg.be