

USING THE EVIDENCE-BASED MODEL FOR IMPROVING OPIOID AGONIST TREATMENT SCALE-UP IN UKRAINE

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BACKGROUND:

Providing opioid agonist therapy (OAT) for people who inject drugs (PWID) is the worldwide strategy for reducing injection drug use and the spread of HIV, HCV and TB. As of January 2020 in Ukraine, only 4.82% receive OAT among an estimated number of PWID, while WHO recommends coverage of at least 20%. The Network for the Improvement of Addiction Treatment (NIATx) is an evidence-based approach to process improvement that helps to identify, study, and change the policies and procedures for OAT patient's access to and retention in treatment.

METHODS:

In January 2020 the American experts trained OAT providers from all 25 regions of Ukraine on how to use the NIATx for process improvement according to their goal. A team of local coaches monthly had "interest circle calls" with Chief Narcologists for consultations on improving OAT services. There were 5 learning sessions with the international team during the year for collaboratives, where the achievements and barriers were discussed.

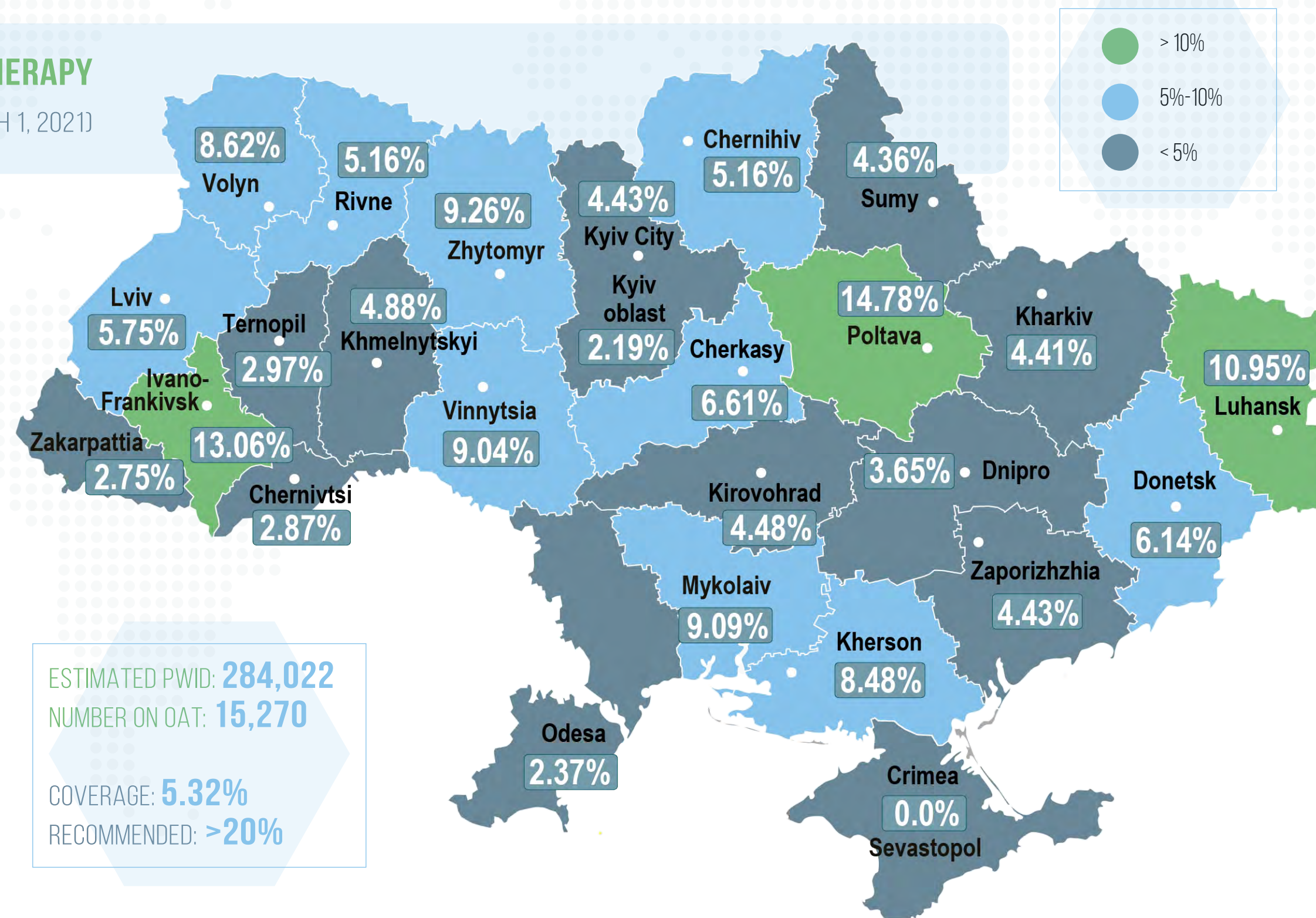
RESULTS:

The number of OAT patients countrywide increased from 12,411 in January 2020 to 15,270 in March 2021 and the percentage of take-home dosing due to COVID-19 response has changed from 40% to 80%. Both ART and OAT receive 35% of patients (N = 5,205), which constitutes 94.1% of all HIV positive patients. NIATx teams identified that the legal field is a major barrier for scale-up.

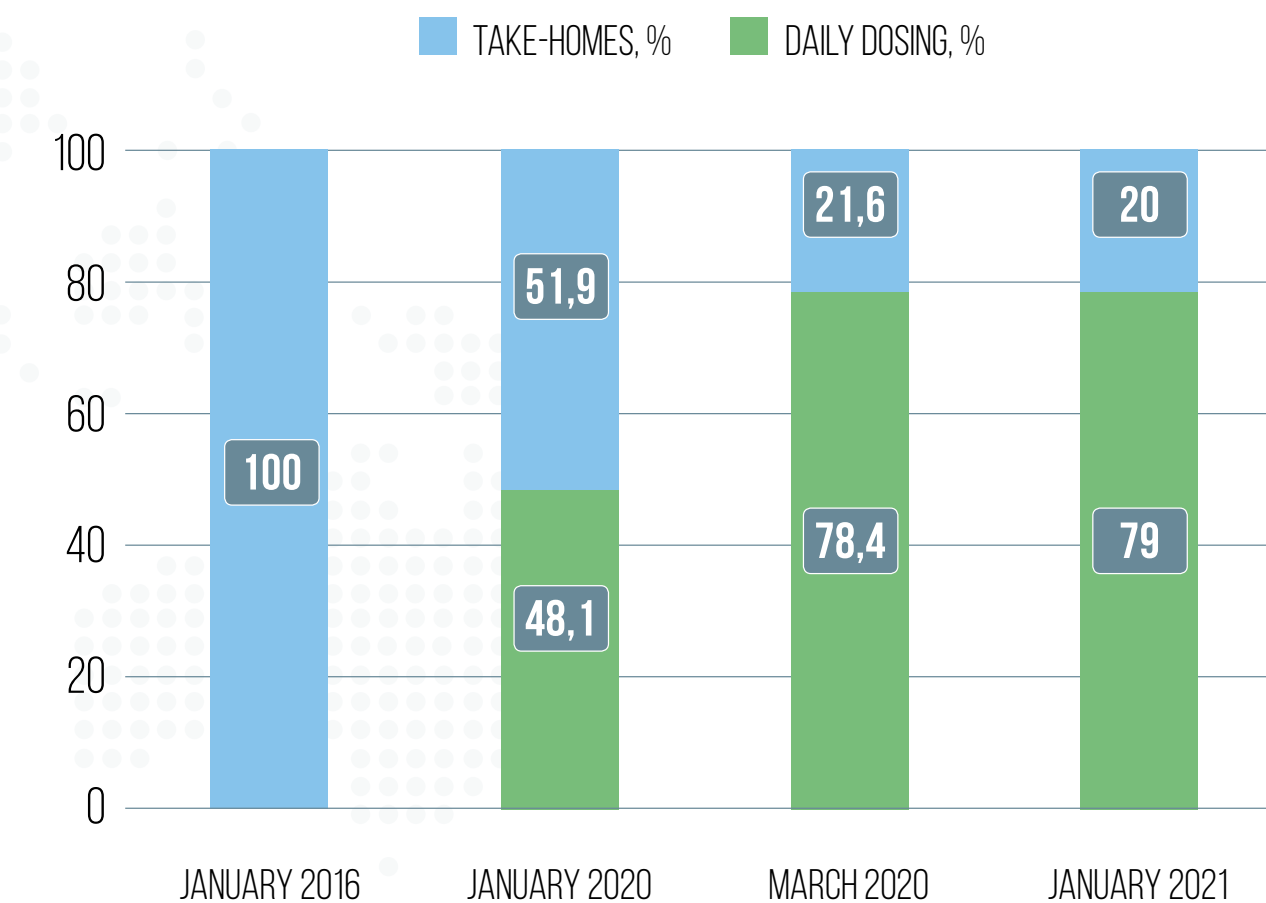
CONCLUSION:

NIATx combines process improvement tools and techniques that contributed to access and retention in addiction treatment in Ukraine. A shared decision-making tool is the instrument that has to be implemented in Ukraine. Its goal is to overcome obstacles to OAT by patients.

COVERAGE WITH OPIOID AGONIST THERAPY BASED ON NUMBER OF PWID (AS OF MARCH 1, 2021)



NUMBER OF OAT PATIENTS ON ANY FORM OF TAKE-HOME MEDICATION IN 2016-2021



2021