



Estonia: AHF Brings HIV Testing to a Marathon in a Hard-hit Corner of the EU

All participants of the Narva Energy Run had an opportunity to get a free rapid HIV test during a testing outreach organized by the Linda Clinic

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NARVA, Estonia--(BUSINESS WIRE)--During the Narva Energy Run in Narva on June 10, Linda Clinic sprinted to a new record, testing 101 people and identifying one HIV-positive individual in conjunction with the marathon aimed at promoting a healthy lifestyle. The clinic is a community-based health facility on the border of Russia and Estonia, co-founded by the AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF) – the largest global AIDS organization.

“Offering HIV testing in public places encourages people to think about their health,” said Igor Pshenov, Linda Clinic Manager. “We will follow up this event with many more throughout the summer, so that everyone can have convenient access to free HIV testing. We also give out free condoms to anyone who wants them, since they are one of the best ways to prevent HIV infections.”

The Linda Clinic offers free HIV testing, treatment, condoms, care and support in a friendly and non-judgmental setting. HIV medication (antiretroviral drugs) in the clinic is provided through the Estonian government, while other services are implemented with support from AHF. The clinic currently serves 230 people living with HIV.

The challenges with HIV in the Ida Viru region, where Narva is located, are still dire. According to local health officials, around 5 percent of the city’s adult population is living with HIV, which is about 3,000 people out of a population of 60,000. Approximately 1,000 are not aware of their HIV-positive status, while another 1,000 know their status but are not consistently enrolled in care. The testing events conducted by Linda Clinic are intended to help people find out their status and access care, treatment and support.

The HIV epidemic in Narva is mainly driven by drug use, high unemployment rates and an unstable socio-economic situation. These challenges often affect people’s ability to seek care, initiate HIV treatment and stay in care.

“Living with HIV is no longer a death sentence; with timely treatment and care, people can live long and healthy lives. Women living with HIV can give birth to healthy babies. It is so important to stress this because in our region there is still so much fear and a lack of access to recent information,” Pshenov said.

AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF), the largest global AIDS organization, currently provides medical care and/or services to over 750,000 individuals in 39 countries worldwide in the US, Africa, Latin America/Caribbean, the Asia/Pacific Region and Eastern Europe. To learn more about AHF, please visit our website: www.aidshealth.org, find us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/aidshealth, and follow us on Twitter: [@aidshealthcare](https://twitter.com/aidshealthcare) and Instagram: [@aidshealthcare](https://www.instagram.com/aidshealthcare).

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