Development of Quality Assurance Mechanism and Tools for drug use disorders treatment: Evaluation of good practices informed by science and ethical principles towards continuous quality improvement

**BACKGROUND**

Following the launch of the UNODC-WHO International Standards for the Treatment of Drug Use Disorders (2017) [1], there was a need for new globally applicable tools to ensure a qualified and effective response to drug use disorders (SUDs) around the world. The work contributed to the achievement of the following United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): SDG 3 (good health and well-being), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), SDG 16 (peace and justice, strong institutions), and SDG 17 (partnerships for the goals). The tools were designed to support the improvement of drug treatment systems; quality assurance for treatment of drug use disorders). These tools are aimed at improving drug treatment services and care by leveraging existing or new processes to collect, verify, analyse and report relevant information to ensure treatment and care services.

**METHOD**

After literature review on the quality of drug treatment programmes and services, UNODC, in collaboration with WHO and drug treatment experts, developed the QAM/Tools [2], by bringing together acknowledged experts. Under the overall supervision and coordination of UNODC, the QAM/Tools were developed and further enhanced through various reviews.

The QAM/Tools were further enhanced in two ways: field testing of the QAM/Tools in Afghanistan and second phase of QA assessment for 42 drug treatment centres in four countries of the Middle East and Central Asia. The QAM/Tools were further enhanced in two ways: field testing of the QAM/Tools in Afghanistan and second phase of QA assessment for 42 drug treatment centres in four countries of the Middle East and Central Asia.

**RESULTS**

In November 2016 the technical consultation meeting took place in Astana, Kazakhstan. These were the elements of the new quality tools and services were discussed and identified. The expert group considered that the Standards encompass drug treatment system development and clinical guidelines, and that the QAM/Tools were needed to support these guidelines. The QAM/Tools is a culturally transferable BRAG rating system that coordinates drug treatment and health system services planning based on the community and drug use disorder treatment system.

**CONCLUSION**

The QAM/Tools were culturally applicable with a group of drug treatment experts in November 2016. The UNODC, in collaboration with WHO and drug treatment experts, developed the QAM/Tools for the treatment of SUDs. The QAM/Tools is a culturally transferable BRAG rating system that coordinates drug treatment and health system services planning based on the community and drug use disorder treatment system.

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[1] The QAM/Tools were developed in March 2017, collecting inputs from international, regional, and national treatment experts via peer review process. The QAM/Tools consist of the five standards: SDG 3.2 (SDG 3.2 indicator: UN/ODC-WHO International Standards for the Treatment of Drug Use Disorders), SDG 8.3 (SDG 8.3.2: the national strategic multi-sectorial partnership that coordinates drug treatment and health system services planning based on the community and drug use disorder treatment system), SDG 16.3 (SDG 16.3.3: the national strategic multi-sectorial partnership that coordinates drug treatment and health system services planning based on the community and drug use disorder treatment system), SDG 17.17 (SDG 17.17.1: the national strategic multi-sectorial partnership that coordinates drug treatment and health system services planning based on the community and drug use disorder treatment system).

[2] The QAM/Tools were widely disseminated and used in various locations around the world.

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**SERVICES QAM/TOOLS FIELD TESTING IN AFGHANISTAN**

The QAM/Tools were culturally applicable with a group of drug treatment experts in November 2016. The UNODC, in collaboration with WHO and drug treatment experts, developed the QAM/Tools for the treatment of SUDs. The QAM/Tools is a culturally transferable BRAG rating system that coordinates drug treatment and health system services planning based on the community and drug use disorder treatment system.

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**THE EVALUATION OF EIGHT WORKSHOPS**

More than 19 per cent of participants in each workshop rated the training and QA tasks positively. The BRAG rating tools were culturally transferable and helpful, though countries had very different ideas about what constituted such criteria during training. Cultural adaptability was improved by integrating drug treatment system planning with the national strategic multi-sectorial partnership and activities in the development of national clinical and recovery protocols and guidelines. In 2019, the national strategic multi-sectorial partnership (NSP) and the QAM/Tools were implemented in four countries of the Middle East and Central Asia (Afghanistan, Algeria, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Viet Nam, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan).

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**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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**REFERENCES**

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**INFORMATION**

The UN/ODC, in collaboration with WHO and drug treatment experts, developed the QAM/Tools for the treatment of SUDs. The QAM/Tools is a culturally transferable BRAG rating system that coordinates drug treatment and health system services planning based on the community and drug use disorder treatment system. The UN/ODC and WHO provide culturally adaptable tools to support achievement of the United Nations SDGs for the treatment of drug and other substance use disorders.