

LRC Exchange Fosters Collaboration Between AIHA Partners in Russia and Zambia

Two information coordinators from the DOD-funded Learning Resource Centers (LRCs) established with Twinning Center support at Maina Soko Hospital and the Defense Force School of Health Sciences in Lusaka, Zambia, traveled to Russia in August to tour LRCs at AIHA partnership institutions in Orenburg Oblast.

The exchange commenced in Moscow with a meeting with AIHA Information and Communications Technology staff and information coordinators from graduated partnerships in Moscow, Stavropol, and Tashkent who have been managing LRCs for several years.

Ministry of Defense Warrant Officer First Class Tommy Sajisa and School of Health Sciences Nursing Tutor Major David Ndhlovu had the opportunity to discuss fundamentals related to the operation and expansion of LRCs with peers who have already tackled these issues. Topics of particular interest included tips on setting up an LRC, providing staff training on evidence-based medicine, all aspects of telemedicine, and sustainability.



AIHA ICT Program Coordinator Irina Shumilova And Dr. Oleg Popov of the Novotroisk AIDS Center demonstrate the PMTCT database designed and implemented through AIHA's HIV/AIDS projects in Russia.

The group then traveled to Orenburg Oblast, where AIHA has had an HIV/AIDS care and treatment partnership project since 2004. There, they visited the LRC established at Orenburg Oblast AIDS Center in 2004, as well as more recently established centers at the AIDS Centers in Orsk and Novotroisk.

The team also toured the Orenburg Medical AIDS Training and Education Center located at the Infectious Disease Hospital and was invited to visit an information center organized by a PLWHA group in Orsk.

During a roundtable hosted by the Orenburg Oblast AIDS Center, LRC and other staff presented an overview of their ICT-related programs and Sajisa shared many of the results of the LRC project at Maina Soko Hospital. The institutional



Dr. Alexander Pankov discusses his work as info-coordinator at Orenburg State Medical Academy's LRC with the Zambian partners and AIHA ICT consultant Irina Ibraghimova.

accomplishments Sajisa credits to the LRC include the hospital being selected as a pilot site for an electronic medical records system by Zambia's Ministry of Health and the CDC and as a pilot telemedicine site in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and the University Teaching Hospital in Lusaka.

The Zambian information coordinators attended a two-hour training session titled, "Medical and Healthcare Information: Search and Management," and received all related materials. The exchange fostered a spirit of collaboration among participants on both sides despite the language barriers. Irina Shumilova,

AIHA's Moscow-based ICT program coordinator, provided instruction on translating software and other free Web-based services that can help facilitate communication and future cooperation.