



## **HIV/AIDS AND TB NEWSLETTER**

### **NEWSLETTER FROM THE NATIONAL HIV/AIDS AND TB PROGRAMME, PRETORIA**

Number 20 19 April 2002

#### **EDITOR'S NOTES AND STAFF NEWS**

Happy birthday to the staff members of the HIV/AIDS and TB unit who celebrate their birthday in April:

- David Allen (28)

Also, the Chief Directorate welcomes a new Director, Dr. Rose Mulumba. Dr. Mulumba is the Director: HIV/AIDS and STIs. (See the address list at the end for her contact details).

Mr. Collen Bonnecwe is still within the Unit, but will focus on different strategic areas, primarily NGO funding, and coordinating the activities of the other units of the Department of Health as it relates to HIV/AIDS (through the HIV/AIDS Task Team).

#### **LOVELIFE PARTNERSHIP**

The Minister of Health, on behalf of the South African government, in February 2002 signed a five-year public-private partnership with the U.S.-based Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation in support of the national loveLife youth HIV prevention programme. In terms of this agreement, the South African Government will provide R75 million over the first three years and the Kaiser Family Foundation will provide matching funds amounting to R300 million.

These funds will support three specific sets of loveLife programme activities:

The *National Adolescent Friendly Clinic Initiative (NAFCI)*, which is a progressive rollout programme, designed to incorporate most of the 4,500 public clinics in the next five years. The programme establishes minimum standards for adolescent friendly sexual health services in public clinics, and facilitates improvements in quality of care

and community outreach. NAFCI has already been piloted in 35 sites around the country and is developed by loveLife in partnership with the Department of Health.

The loveLife Games incorporates all school sports in the country and is managed in partnership with the Department of Sports and Recreation, and the United Schools Sports Association of South Africa (USSASA). The loveLife Games is a yearlong calendar of sport events run at district, regional and provincial level and culminating in a national "mini Olympics". loveLife has introduced lifestyle education into the Games, and has also increased participation by adding non-athletic activities to the programme, and by increasing funding to enable greater participation in the Games by seriously disadvantaged schools. In 2001 approximately 500,000 school children participated in the loveLife Games.

The groundBreakers programme is the nucleus of a national youth service corps involving 18-25 year olds on a volunteer basis in a year long programme to help mobilise and educate youth about HIV in remoter parts of the country, and to provide a link between public health clinics, one-stop centres of the Department of Social Development and loveLife Y-Centres and other loveLife outreach programs. loveLife will work in partnership with the Department of Social Development in the implementation of this programme. The Nelson Mandela Foundation has contributed additional funds and the goal is to increase the number of groundBreakers to 600 over the next 18 months.

An inter-departmental steering committee, chaired by the Minister of Health, has been set up to oversee development and implementation of these programs.

For more information on loveLife go to [www.loveLife.org.za](http://www.loveLife.org.za)



## **CABINET STATEMENT ON HIV/AIDS, 17 APRIL 2002**

"Cabinet today received a comprehensive briefing on the implementation of government policy on HIV/AIDS. The meeting reiterated government's commitment to the HIV/AIDS and STI Strategic Plan for South Africa, 2000-2005.

This comprehensive programme is backed up by a massive increase in resources. The total budget to be spent mainly through the Departments of Health, Social Development and Education was R350m in 2001/02; it has been increased to R1-billion in this financial year, and will go up to R1.8-billion in 04/05.

Cabinet welcomed the progress that is being made in ensuring that the South African public in general and the youth in particular are aware of the dangers of the epidemic. It called on all South Africans to take full responsibility and care for their lives. Government will intensify the awareness campaign, as part of its comprehensive strategy against HIV/AIDS. The challenge is to ensure that awareness continues to translate into a change in behaviour.

In conducting this campaign, government's starting point is based on the premise that HIV causes AIDS. It is also critical for us, as a nation, to note that there is no cure for AIDS. In this regard, promoting awareness and life skills and HIV/AIDS education forms the core of our approach.

A critical element of this strategy is the strengthening of partnerships among all South Africans and their organisations to fight this epidemic. Government commits itself to this objective, and will participate actively in the review of SANAC currently underway, in order to strengthen the organisation. "Core SANAC Ministers", now including the Minister in the Presidency and the Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, will be constituted into a Presidential Task Team on AIDS, headed by the Deputy President. Further, measures will be introduced to strengthen government structures dealing with this matter.

On other issues of prevention, the meeting decided as follows:

Research on the use of Nevirapine against mother-to-child transmission will continue; at the same time as government implements the temporary ruling of the Constitutional Court. In the meantime, the Department of Health is working on a Universal Roll-out Plan to be completed as soon as possible, in preparation for the post-December 2002 period.

Cabinet decided that, with regard to cases of sexual assault, government will endeavour to provide a comprehensive package of care for victims, including counselling, testing for HIV, pregnancy and STIs.

In this regard, survivors will be counselled, including on the risks of using anti-retrovirals as preventative drugs, so they could make an informed choice. If they so choose (as is the case with needle-stick injuries), they will be provided with such drugs in public health institutions. A standardised national protocol in this regard will be finalised as soon as possible.

With regard to treatment, Cabinet emphasised the commitment of government to treatment and management of opportunistic infections. No South African should be sent away and not treated irrespective of their HIV status. Given the critical importance of drugs dealing with infections such as meningitis, oral thrush, TB and pneumonia, Cabinet urged the public, especially People Living with AIDS, to assist government in monitoring their availability.

On anti-retroviral treatments in general, Cabinet noted that they could help improve the conditions of PWAs if administered at certain stages in the progression of the condition, in accordance with international standards. However, because these drugs are too costly for universal access and, because they can cause harm if incorrectly used and if the health systems are inadequate, government will continue to work for the lowering of the cost of these drugs, and intensify the campaign to ensure

that patients observe treatment advice given to them by doctors.

Further, alongside poverty alleviation and nutritional interventions, government will encourage investigation into alternative treatments, particularly on supplements and medication for boosting the immune system.

Cabinet reiterated government's strong commitment to assist families affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic. We are also improving the programme of home-based care and community-based care, for which allocations of R94.5-million have been made this year, and R138-million in 2004/05.

Government calls on all South Africans to join hands in a campaign of hope: to mobilise our strength as a nation and as individuals to ensure that, we are able to manage, reduce and, in the long-run, defeat this epidemic. We have it in our power to achieve this objective. What is critical is that we should work together as a united force to achieve the best interests of our society."

The Department of Health will now move forward on the steps required to implement the Cabinet decisions.

#### **ERRATUM: DONATION FROM JAPANESE GOVERNMENT**

In the previous newsletter I incorre4ctly referred to the donation from the Japanese International Development agency, whereas the correct name is the Japanese International *Cooperation* Agency.

#### **USEFUL WEBSITES**

[www.health.gov.za](http://www.health.gov.za)

[www.aidsdirectory.co.za](http://www.aidsdirectory.co.za)

[www.medadvocates.org/news/main10818.html#Week-in-Review](http://www.medadvocates.org/news/main10818.html#Week-in-Review)

[www.dpp.org.za](http://www.dpp.org.za)

[www.hst.org.za](http://www.hst.org.za)

[www.childaidsservices.org](http://www.childaidsservices.org)

[www.equinet africa.org](http://www.equinet africa.org)

[www.unaids.org](http://www.unaids.org)

You are also encouraged to share information on other useful websites. Feedback on the Department of Health website would be especially valuable.



*Compiled by Celia M Serenata  
Deputy Director: HIV/AIDS and STDs  
Tel: (012) 312-0128  
Fax: (012) 326-2891  
e-mail: [serenc@health.gov.za](mailto:serenc@health.gov.za)*

#### **Red Ribbon Resource Centre**

For all requests of HIV/AIDS materials (posters etc.), please contact:

Ms. Loreley Yeowart  
Tel: (011) 880-0405  
Fax: (011) 880-8552

#### **Address List for Chief Directorate**

Fax: (012) 326-2891 or (012) 323-7323

Dr. Nono Simelela  
Chief Director: HIV/AIDS and TB  
Tel: (012) 312-0121  
[simeln@health.gov.za](mailto:simeln@health.gov.za)

Collen Bonnecwe  
Director: HIV/AIDS (NGOs)  
Tel: (012) 312-0137  
[bonnec@health.gov.za](mailto:bonnec@health.gov.za)



Thami Skenjana  
Director: GAAP  
Tel: (012) 312-0133  
Fax: (012) 325-0165

Dr. Refiloe Matji  
Director: TB  
Tel: (012) 312-0106  
Fax: (012) 326-4365  
[matjir@health.gov.za](mailto:matjir@health.gov.za)

Dr. Rose Mulumba  
Director: HIV/AIDS and STIs  
[mulumr@health.gov.za](mailto:mulumr@health.gov.za)



**AIDS HELPLINE**  
**☎ 0800-012-322**