

Health Minister Dr. Motsoaledi and Traditional Leaders join forces in the fight against HIV & TB

Health Minister Dr. Aaron Motsoaledi, and Traditional leaders in South Africa has joined forces under the auspices of the South African National Aids Council (SANAC) in the fight against HIV, AIDS & Tuberculosis (TB) as part of the implementation of the National Strategic plan (NSP).

The partnership between the Department of Health and Traditional leaders has culminated into the signing of the ground briefing pledge aimed at the revitalization of the HCT campaign in rural areas under traditional leaders.

The NSP on HIV, STI's and TB - a twenty year vision for reversing the burden of disease from HIV, STI's and TB in South Africa is based on the following pillars:

- Zero new HIV and TB infections
- Zero new Mother to child transmission
- Zero preventable death from HIV and TB
- Zero discrimination associated with HIV, STI's and TB

During the signing ceremony, the Traditional leaders presented a comprehensive prevention strategy that includes but not limited to the following:

- HIV Testing and Counseling (HCT)
- Initiation and Medical Male Circumcision (MMC)
- Fight against Drug and substance abuse
- Awareness campaigns
- Demystification of myths about HIV & AIDS and TB
- Fight against discrimination and stigmatization

"HIV; AIDS and TB confronts all of us and therefore we must intensify our fight against this pandemics, if not our gains will be reversed - we have to act and we should act now", Inkosi P.T Zulu said.

Pledge by the SANAC traditional leaders sector on intensifying their role in the Revitalized HIV/AIDS Counseling and Testing Campaign

We, traditional leaders, gathered here at the St George's Conference Centre in Centurion, on the 31st of March 2014, under the auspices of the South African National Aids Council, under the theme: Intensifying the role of traditional leaders in the HIV Counseling and Testing campaign, having participated on deliberations on the state of the HIV/AIDS and TB epidemics in South Africa led by the, Minister of Health, and the presentation on the prevention strategies that work for HIV/AIDS and TB, and recognizing the negative impact of the dual epidemics on our people and the many successful interventions which have in the past few years both lowered and mitigated the impact of these diseases,

Hereby make the following pledge:

1. We are committed to making a contribution, to the achievement of the goals set out in the National Strategic Plan on HIV, STI and TB 2012-2016 Which are :

- Halving the number of new HIV infections;
- Ensuring that at least 80% of people who are eligible for treatment for HIV are receiving it
- Halving the number of new TB infections and deaths from TB
- Ensuring that the rights of people living with HIV are protected; and
- Halving the stigma related to HIV and TB.

2. We are committed to intensifying our role in the Revitalized HCT Campaign by providing leadership and information on the importance of the Campaign to our people.

We shall during the course of the campaign call upon our people to access the services provided by the Department of Health and their partners.

3 . We are committed to a strong partnership with the Department of Health and other South African National Aids Council sectors and will work closely with them to ensure that HCT campaign package of services reach and benefit all our people. To this end we commit to signing an agreement with the Department of Health that will fully outline the elements of our collaboration in the rollout and intensification of the HCT campaign and other health services to our people.

4. We will ensure that as traditional leaders, we participate fully in all SANAC structures established to govern and monitor the HIV and AIDS & TB response at sub-district, district, provincial and national levels. We sign this pledge with some joy on the news that indeed, the fight against the dual epidemics in our country has turned a corner. Our people are living longer, healthier and more productive lives than they did 5 years ago:

The pledge was signed by the Minister of Health: Dr. Aaron Motsoaledi; Kgosi P.P Maubane - Chairperson of the National House of Traditional Leaders and Dr. Farred Abdullah, the Chief Executive Officer of the South African National AIDS Council.

Ends.

Enquiries:

Joe Maila

Ministry of Health: Spokesperson

Mobile: [082 887 3581](tel:0828873581)

Email(s): mailaj@health.gov.za health.spokesperson@gmail.com

Twitter: @mjmaila @HealthZA

