

Access to Treatment, Care & Support

Plenary presentation

1. Acknowledging guests
2. Presentation

Introductions

Access to Treatment, Care & Support for all people living with HIV in Papua New Guinea is of great importance to Igat Hope Inc. In some of the more recent reports from WHO/Health Department, there are over 26,000 people living with HIV in PNG and rapidly rising AIDS statistics each year. Less than 5,000 people are currently on or receiving treatment and of that most are residing in and around Port Moresby and other urban provinces. Igat Hope Inc as the national network of people living with HIV and AIDS has seen greater need from the national level in the unstable provision of these services and therefore advocate for Treatment access, care and support provision for people living with HIV and AIDS in Papua New Guinea.

Success stories:

Success story for Igat Hope Inc is that since ART was introduced in 2004, there had being great increase of people living with HIV who are on treatment. However, there are challenges that Igat Hope Inc is faced with in terms of providing information to treatment, care and support services. Over the past years since Igat Hope Inc was established there were greater needs such as for people living with HIV who are receiving ART treatments to understand the work of the treatment in the Human body and to understand the concept of care and support being provided by our partners who are providing that assistance.

Igat Hope Inc has worked closely with the Health Department/WHO, where some of its members have being included in the IMAI training of the past years. However Igat Hope Inc still sees a challenge in this area on what best actions that can be taken as a National Advocacy body to address this issue on treatment, care and support. And early this year 2008, a Treatments literacy workshop was conducted in Port Moresby by (AMFAR) American Federation of AIDS Research with the help of (APN+) Asia Pacific National Network of People living with HIV, where 10 members of Igat Hope Inc participated in this workshop to become TOT Treatment Literacy Trainers. A Treatments committee was established which four members of the committee represent. The purpose of establishing this committee was to oversee and advocate from a national

level the issues and needs in relation to access to treatments, care and support services for people living with HIV and AIDS in Papua New Guinea.

Challenges

Challenges for Igat Hope Inc though, is that since the Treatments committee was established, the committee did not implement treatments literacy program due to Igat Hope Inc's work plan this year 2008. However, Igat Hope Inc is prepared to advocate on Treatments, care and support issues next year 2009 and also aims to implement trainings on Treatment Literacy programs.

There are other challenges that Igat Hope Inc advocates for by seeing the needs, its members are faced with such as:

- Hunger and poverty
- Lack of family care & support to provide the best care needed for the family member who is living with HIV.
- PLHIV are always distressing symptoms and have considerable emotional suffering and do experience stigma and discrimination.
- There are other needs such as providing school fees for children belonging to parents who are sick and weak living with HIV, food, health care and identifying potential family members who could provide assistance.

Way forward recommendations:

- Igat Hope Inc advocates working in consultation or involved with Health Department/WHO in terms of their thoughts and inputs as PLHIV or setting up treatment guidelines and treatment roll out programs.
- Igat Hope Inc advocates for more adequate training on treatment literacy in Papua New Guinea for all PLHIV whether they are on treatment or not.
- Igat Hope Inc advocates for Treatment, Care and Support issues affecting PLHIV in PNG on media campaigns or public campaigns.
- Igat Hope Inc advocates working in consultation or involved with partners who are providing Care and Support programs for PLHIV including the types of services being provided in the Day Care Centers.
- Igat Hope Inc advocates for immediate families of PLHIV to provide care and support to PLHIV as family members to address stigma and discrimination affecting PLHIV in their own communities.
- Igat Hope Inc advocates for Treatments to be available at all accredited sites and sustainability maintained, with other health facilities such as CD4 count machines to monitor CD4 count to maintain better health with the assistance of qualified health practitioners.

