

2013 WORLD AIDS DAY REFERENCE BOOKLET AND GUIDING MESSAGES



THEME: Get wise. Get tested. Get circumcised.

WORLD AIDS DAY 2013

Much of the accomplishments that South Africa can boast about today emanate from the changes that unfolded four years ago. There are three phrases which made up the theme of World AIDS Day 2009, and these provided impetus to South Africa to set sail on a journey towards the improvement of the health system and dedicated commitment to addressing the HIV and TB epidemics that faced the country.

These are: **“I AM RESPONSIBLE, WE ARE RESPONSIBLE, SOUTH AFRICA IS TAKING RESPONSIBILITY”**.

On **1 December 2009**, President Zuma called on each South African to take personal responsibility for their health and well-being. President Zuma announced that government would put into place policies to support the scale-up of anti-retroviral treatment to those who need it. The policies became law on April 1 2010. Setting the example at the launch of the HIV Counselling and Testing (HCT) campaign, President Zuma called on each and every South African to demonstrate that they are responsible by taking an HIV test. Since then, more than 20 million South Africans have shown that **“I AM RESPONSIBLE”** by testing for HIV.

On **1 December 2010**, the 22nd commemoration of World AIDS Day, South Africans took the next step on the journey towards being responsible citizens whose rights are protected under the law. The Presidency called on the nation to demonstrate how, collectively we can start to address and overcome the challenges of HIV. Since then, South Africans have been taking collective responsibility to ensure that:

- We supported and influenced people within our sphere of influence to reduce risky sexual behaviour in order to prevent the spread of HIV;
- We began a dialogue amongst South Africans in our homes, communities, workplaces and places of worship, to support the process in the development of the national strategy that will guide our response to HIV and AIDS, TB & STIs during the period 2012 – 2016;
- All sectors of society interrogated their role as sectors and communities in addressing the epidemic and showed that **WE ARE RESPONSIBLE** for each other in ensuring a healthy society through the HIV and AIDS, TB & STIs National Strategic Plan 2012 – 2016;
- We continue to test and influence others to test for HIV and TB as a routine way of ensuring we make the correct healthy lifestyle choices, irrespective of status.

On **1 December 2011**, the Deputy President of South Africa and chairperson of the South African National AIDS Council (SANAC), launched the most important document whose development was aimed at guiding South Africa’s response towards an HIV and TB-free society – the HIV and AIDS, TB and STIs National Strategic Plan 2012 – 2016

On this day, the nation demonstrated that **SOUTH AFRICA IS TAKING RESPONSIBILITY** by presenting a National Strategic Plan (NSP) that has seen contributions from across the nation, including community and individual input towards its development. Government, civil society and the general public had been contributing to the new NSP since November 2010. The NSP is a living document, and with rapidly changing dynamics within the social and biomedical fields, there is a need for on-going public engagement around issues related to HIV, TB and STIs.

Unlike the previous NSP, this NSP offers SANAC the opportunity to engage in processes whereby input into the NSP can be obtained on a regular and consistent basis in the years of the NSP implementation. Furthermore, the NSP offers a unique opportunity to effectively integrate emerging scientific evidence of new interventions with innovation at the community level in order to systematically align the response to HIV, AIDS and TB with new policy directives from government and political leadership.

The evidence-based approach is used to facilitate implementation, accountability and ownership of the NSP across the country.

The NSP is considered a living document and the opportunities for public input need to continue for its duration. In other words, all sectors of society embark on a **Policy in Action on TB and HIV (PATH)** Campaign that will place HIV and TB onto the current agenda of community engagement between civil society and government.

The aim of the PATH campaign is to have the Deputy President hear what communities are saying regarding HIV and TB and, through SANAC, ensure that these community-based issues are addressed by the relevant Ministries and SANAC sectors. The PATH Challenge will be where the Deputy President challenges all Ministers, starting with the IMC Ministers, to embark on a PATH Campaign specific to their Ministry. These interactions will then form the basis for the **Deputy President's Annual PATH Update on World AIDS Day**.

The update will provide the country with a sense of the achievements and challenges of the year. It will also provide the country with a vision of the response to HIV and TB in the year to come. The vision is to use each World AIDS Day as the public review of the South African response to HIV and TB.

The Deputy President of South Africa and Chairperson of the South African National AIDS Council invite all interested parties to contribute to the development and continued improvement of the most critical document that will guide the country out of the HIV and TB epidemics - the HIV and AIDS, TB & STIs National Strategic Plan (NSP) 2012 – 2016.

The Policy in Action on HIV and TB (PATH) Campaign offers all people interested in the health and well-being of their fellow brothers and sisters an opportunity to make sure that the National Strategic Plan that guides our response to HIV and TB is responsive to our needs as individuals, families and communities.

POLICIES WHICH WERE IMPLEMENTED IN 2010:

- All children under one year of age must receive treatment if they test positive. Initiating treatment will, therefore, not be determined by the level of CD 4 cells.
- All patients with both tuberculosis (TB) and HIV will receive anti-retroviral treatment if their CD4 count is 350 or less.
- All pregnant HIV-positive women with a CD4 count of 350 or with AIDS symptoms, regardless of CD4 count, will have access to treatment. All other pregnant women not falling into this category, but who are HIV-positive, will be put on treatment at 14 weeks of pregnancy to protect the baby. In the past, this was only started during the last term of pregnancy.
- Anti-retroviral treatment will be accessed at primary health care or clinic level.

ANTI – RETROVIRAL TREATMENT (ART) NOW AVAILABLE TO PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV WHOSE CD4 CELL COUNT IS 350 OR LESS

On Friday, 12 August 2011, the Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa, Honorable, Mr Kgalema Motlanthe, on his capacity as the Chairperson of the South African National AIDS Council (SANAC), made an announcement that people living with HIV (PLHIV) whose CD4 cell count is 350 or less are now eligible to access ART with immediate effect.

On 1 April 2013, Health Minister Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, launched a progressive form of anti-AIDS treatment called a fixed dose combination (FDC). This meant that patients would no longer struggle with taking multiple pills at various intervals of the day. They could now take all the three drugs they need for optimal treatment of HIV infection in one pill.

This applied to patients taking ARVs for the very first time, HIV-positive pregnant women and those patients who are co-infected with both HIV and TB. Patients who were already on treatment would start taking FDC treatment later in the year, upon assessment by health care professionals.

World AIDS Day Campaign 2013 Objectives:

- To **commemorate and celebrate WAD 2013** by sharing with South Africans the developments towards the improvement of health systems in the country since 2009.
- To mobilise South Africans to **increase the uptake of the HIV and Counselling and Testing (HCT) campaign.**
- To mobilise South Africans to support and adopt medical male circumcision as part of the country's HIV prevention strategies.
- To begin a series of **community dialogues, led by key political principles**, which will ensure the effective consultation and input of all South Africans into the PATH Campaign. The aim of the PATH campaign is to have the Deputy President hear what communities are saying regarding HIV and TB and, through SANAC, ensure that these community-based issues are addressed by the relevant Ministries and SANAC sectors.
- To mobilise South Africans to recognise and protect **human rights.**
- This World AIDS Day provides us with the opportunity to reinforce our commitment to the NSP.
- This World AIDS Day provides us with the opportunity to revive and sustain the HIV Counselling and Testing (HCT) campaign going forward.
- This World AIDS Day provides us with the opportunity to promote medical male circumcision – a scientifically tested and proven tool against HIV infection.

WORLD AIDS DAY CAMPAIGN THEME 2013

- The theme for World AIDS Day 2009 addressed individual responsibility and accountability by mobilising South Africans to know their health status and test for TB, HIV and other diseases: **“I am responsible”**.
- The theme for 2010 addressed the collective responsibility of communities by enabling them to talk about issues that affect their health and how this could be changed in next NSP: **“We are responsible”**.
- The theme for 2011 demonstrated South Africa's responsibility towards HIV: **“South Africa is taking Responsibility”**.
- The theme for 2012 was **“A re dlale safe”**. Inspired by the African soccer tournament, the theme called on South Africans to take responsibility: **Let's play safe** against new HIV, TB and STIs infections.
- The theme for 2013 will continue with this trend and will call on South Africans to:

At the individual level...

- Everyone to know his or her HIV status by testing regularly for HIV.
- Every man to go for medical male circumcision.
- Young people must delay having sex for the first time.
- Sexually active people to be faithful to their partners and to use condoms each time they have sex.
- People must make informed choices to plan and prevent unwanted pregnancies.
- Pregnant women to test for HIV early in their pregnancy and to use condoms each time they have sex.
- Those with TB to test for HIV and those with HIV to test for TB so that they can get the right treatment.

At the community level...

- Communities to stop stigma and discrimination around HIV and to support those who want to know their status.
- Communities to stop stigma and discrimination around medical male circumcision and to support those who want to go for medical male circumcision.
- Communities to provide care and support to those living with and affected by HIV, in particular, orphans and vulnerable children.
- Men, women, families, communities and health care workers to support pregnant women to protect their children from HIV.
- Communities to take action and speak out against violence against women.
- Couples to talk about their relationships and how they can protect themselves from HIV and STIs infection by being faithful and only having sex with each other. Couples to discuss HIV testing and medical male circumcision and to go for regular HIV testing together.

At the country level...

The responsibility falls on government and all sectors of society represented in the South African National AIDS Council to provide leadership to ensure that:

- Every South African can prevent HIV infection.
- Know their HIV status.
- Pregnant women can access Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission services.
- All those with TB can access TB drugs and that all HIV-positive people can access care and Anti-Retroviral (ARV) treatment.

WORLD AIDS DAY 2013 – BECOME PART OF THE RESPONSE AND SHOW THAT SOUTH AFRICA IS TAKING RESPONSIBILITY ON A PATH TO ZERO

- Provide red ribbons to your employees, colleagues, family, friends and neighbours to show your collective commitment to fighting HIV and AIDS.
- Organise a dialogue in your office, community or organisation about what you can do to stop the spread of HIV.
- Organise HIV testing in the workplace.
- Organise information-sharing sessions about medical male circumcision in the workplace.
- Organise a community march.
- Encourage partners, friends, family and colleagues to go for an HIV test and to know their status.

MESSAGES

The following messages serve as guidelines when dealing with different target groups.

HIV Prevention Messages

- If you use condoms correctly and consistently with all sexual partners, for every round of sex, you can protect yourself from HIV and other STI infection.
- Young people should delay sex until they are old enough and ready to make responsible decisions around their sexual behaviour. This includes using condoms correctly and every time, with their partners not only to prevent HIV but also unwanted pregnancies.
- The more sexual partners you have the higher your chance of being infected with HIV or another STI unless you ensure you always have safe sex.
- Every time you start a new sexual relationship you should both go for an HIV test.

- Having sex when you have been drinking or using drugs increases your chances of getting infected with HIV.
- Having sex in exchange for money or other material things increases your chances of getting infected with HIV because it makes it harder to negotiate condom use.

HIV Testing Messages

- HIV testing is free at all public health facilities.
- Everyone should test for HIV to know his or her status and to be screened for TB at the same time. Everyone who has TB should also test for HIV.
- The only way to know your status is to test for HIV. You cannot tell your HIV status by knowing your partners status.
- Every time you start a new sexual relationship, you should both be sure of your HIV status.
- If you test positive, you should have a CD4 cell count test to determine the strength of your immune system and the health worker will help you decide when you need to go onto ART.
- If you test negative you can protect yourself and your sexual partner from HIV by continuing to use a condom and having sex with only your partner.
- When deciding to get pregnant, both partners should get tested for HIV.
- Every pregnant woman and her partner should visit a clinic as soon as she realises she is pregnant and should get tested for HIV in order to make informed decisions to protect the health of the baby.
- Men should test for HIV so that they can make appropriate decisions to protect their health and that of their families.

Provider Initiated Counselling and Testing Messages

- Provider initiated HIV Counselling and Testing will be made available to all people seeking health care as part of a routine examination.
- Provider initiated HIV Counselling and Testing will be offered regardless of whether or not a person chooses to test for HIV.
- Patients have the right to refuse to be tested for HIV without being denied health care.

Messages for HIV-negative people

- If you are negative, make sure you stay negative.
- An HIV-negative test may mean that you are in the window period of infection, and this period may last for 3 weeks. It is important that you go for a test every three months to be sure of your status.

Messages for HIV-positive people

- An HIV-positive result does not mean that you will immediately need to go onto ARVs. You should have a CD4 cell count test to determine the strength of your immune system and the health worker will help you decide when you need to go onto ART.
- The test provides you with information to seek out the various health options and services available for people living with HIV, for example, CD4 and viral load tests as well as ART when they become necessary.
- If you test positive for HIV, you will not be alone. There are people and groups to support you about how you can live positively with HIV.
- Always use a condom when having sex to avoid infecting others or getting re-infected with a different strain of the virus.

- No one should ever force you to share information about your HIV results. Disclosing your status is a personal decision.
- Ask to be tested for TB if you are HIV-positive.

Anti-Retroviral Treatment (ART) Messages

- Everyone living in South Africa with HIV has the right to receive anti-retroviral (ARV) treatment when it is necessary.
- Successful treatment means being responsible for taking the medications every day as prescribed, and this is a lifelong commitment.
- ARV treatment, managing and treating infections, good nutrition and regular exercise can prolong and improve the lives of people living with HIV.
- Your health is your responsibility. If you are HIV-positive, go for regular check-ups at your nearest health facility so that you can get the medications that you need to manage opportunistic infections.
- Do not smoke, as it will cause complications and may shorten your life.
- Do not drink, as it can interfere with your ability to stay healthy. If you cannot abstain from alcohol, drink very little.

Gender Based Violence Messages

- It is everyone's right to live free from fear and abuse. Violence against women and girls is never acceptable. Domestic violence is not a private affair. It affects us all – men and women.
- There is no excuse for rape. Rape is any form of coerced sex. Real men respect women and their right to say no to sex.
- Good relationships are about more than just sex. They are about sharing common interests, dreams and aspirations. Partners can learn how to enjoy each other's company without sex.
- Healthy communities take care of their women and children, and will break the silence about rape and violence in their communities.
- People who have been raped should get a short course of ARVs within 72 hours to prevent getting infected with HIV.

The Link between TB and HIV Messages

- TB is preventable and curable even if you are HIV positive.
- TB is a lung disease caused by bacteria called *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*.
- Like the common cold, someone who has TB coughing, sneezing, talking or spitting a small amount of the germs into the air spreads TB.
- You can prevent TB by coughing into the elbow of your arm, washing your hands after you cough and opening windows and doors to allow fresh air to circulate. Fresh air kills the TB bacteria.
- Babies should be immunised shortly after birth and before the age of 2 to protect them from TB Meningitis.
- People who cough for more than two weeks, have night sweats, an unintentional loss of weight, fatigues and tired feeling and chest pains should screen for TB at their nearest clinic for free.
- If you screen positive for TB, then you must test for HIV. People who test positive for HIV should always also screen for TB.
- People with HIV are more likely to develop TB. HIV weakens the immune system, thus an HIV-infected person who has TB is many times more likely to become sick with TB.
- In South Africa, 76% of people living with HIV and AIDS also have TB.
- If you test positive for TB, you must take your medication for the full six months to cure TB and protect you and others from re-infection.

- You may develop multi drug resistant TB if you stop treatment early because you feel better or miss doses. This is extremely dangerous to your health and the community.

Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV Messages – Saving Mothers, Saving Babies

- Every man and woman has the right to decide if and when they want to have a baby, even if they are HIV positive. You should go for counselling before making a decision so that you can make an informed choice for both you and your unborn child.
- Every man and woman has the responsibility to prevent unwanted pregnancies.
- Every man and woman has the responsibility to protect themselves from HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.
- Every woman has the right to make a choice for a safe and legal termination of her pregnancy within the first 12 weeks. Using unsafe or illegal services can put your life at risk.
- Every pregnant woman and her partner should visit a health clinic as soon as she realises she is pregnant and they should both test for HIV.
- Parents, families, communities and health care workers have the responsibility to support the decisions that women living with HIV make for their babies during the pregnancy and after their birth.
- Every HIV positive pregnant woman has a right to ARV treatment to stay healthy and to prevent infecting her child with HIV.
- Every HIV positive mother has the right to decide whether to only breastfeed or only to use formula feeding. To make this decision, she should discuss these choices with her health care provider.
- Every baby born to an HIV positive mother should be tested for HIV after six weeks.
- Every baby born with HIV has the right to receive ARV treatment as soon as his status is known in order to improve its quality of life.

Medical Male Circumcision Messages

- All men have the right to safe medical male circumcision.
- Medical male circumcision is the full removal of the foreskin by a professional health practitioner in a hygienic clinical setting.
- Medical male circumcision improves hygiene, reduces the risk of sexually transmitted infections, reduces the risk of HIV infection and lowers the risk of penile cancer.
- Medical male circumcision reduces the risk of women contracting the human papilloma virus that causes cervical cancer.
- By lowering the risk of HIV infection amongst men, medical male circumcision also reduces the risk among women.
- In South Africa, some men may get circumcised at birth or through traditional ceremonies. It is important for all men to ensure that they are fully circumcised if they are to get the full medical benefits.
- Men who choose to be circumcised should test for HIV so that they know their HIV status.
- Men who have been medically circumcised should not have sex for six weeks afterwards to allow the wound to fully heal. Having sex before the wound has fully healed can cause tearing, exposing you and your partner to the possibility of HIV infection and causing infections.
- If you are circumcised you still have to use condoms, to prevent unwanted pregnancies and to ensure maximum protection from STIs and HIV.
- Medical male circumcision does not reduce your risk of HIV infection if you have in anal sex.

Multiple Concurrent Partner Relationships Messages

- Having more than one sexual partner in the same period of time greatly increases your risk of getting infected with HIV, and often puts your loved ones at risk.
- Every time you start a new sexual relationship you should both be sure of your HIV status.
- Always use condoms with all your partners every time.
- Relationships where you are getting money or favours in exchange for sex are high risk relationships. These place you at high risk for getting HIV because the power in the relationship is not equal and the person in power can demand unsafe sex.
- A relationship where there is a big age difference between partners is high risk because the power in the relationship is not equal and the person in power can demand unsafe sex

Alcohol and Substance Abuse Messages

- You can have a good time without the influence of alcohol and other substances.
- If you do drink, drink responsibly.
- There are many different ways to cope with problems and relax that do not include getting drunk or using drugs.
- You are more at risk of contracting HIV when you drink alcohol, this is because alcohol stimulates your libido and you can lose control of their actions.

Stigma Messages

Stigma and discrimination not only makes it more difficult for people trying to come to terms with their HIV status and manage their illness on a personal level. It also interferes with attempts to fight the AIDS epidemic as a whole. It has deterred many governments' efforts to taking fast, effective action against the epidemic.

- Stigma is a barrier to HIV testing.
- Stigma is a barrier to access to health.
- End HIV stigma – Improve access to health services.
- End HIV stigma – promote positive living.

Examples of stigma

- Referring to a person who is HIV-positive as dirty or diseased.
- Rejecting an HIV-positive partner when they disclose their HIV status, but accepting them when they don't. Discriminating against someone with HIV doesn't make you safer. Rather be safe and go for couples' counselling and testing each time you get into a new relationship. Also test regularly as a couple when in a relationship.
- An attitude that HIV-positive people are guilty or are failures.
- Gossiping about the HIV status of a person in the community and avoiding them based on the assumption or knowledge that they have HIV.