



PLUS

April 2009

Network of Maharashtra People with HIV

PLC staff share expertise



Staff of the 3 Maharashtra Positive Living Centres attended a workshop recently. The well established Pune PLC helped pass on their experience to the newer Beed and Wardha PLCs. The meeting was sponsored by Population Foundation International. Rohini Gore and Vijaya Krause from PFI and Mahesh Kharat from the National Aids Research Institute, Pune, helped facilitate.

Phone brainwave

Staff at the Dhule network have come up with a great idea; their own confidential telephone helpline, Aamhi Aanandane Jagto (*We are living happily*). It provides immediate and accurate information to anyone with an interest in HIV and AIDS. Dhule staff believe good information is vital for a more informed society. Callers can include positive people, those who are affected, or anyone with a query about HIV or its transmission.

Positive people suffering from stress or depression can ring to talk to a positive person. The message they will receive is that you can live happily with HIV and lead a free and satisfying life.

In a novel way of keeping track of customer satisfaction, there is an SMS facility for people who have used the helpline to say whether it was useful. A large majority, 79%, have said it was.

The helpline is available from 9.30 - 5.30. The number is:

02562 236004

Below, Left to right, Sangeeta Patil and Jyoti Hingone, counsellors, Dhule district, and the helpline leaflet.



नेटवर्क ऑफ धुळे वाय पिपल
लिट्हीन विथ एच.आय.व्ही.धुळे

हेल्पलाईन क्रमांक
०२५६२-२३६००४, २३२६००

“आम्ही एच.आय.व्ही. सह
आनंदात जगत आहोत,
तुम्हालाही आनंदाने जगायचे असेल
तर आम्हाला संपर्क करा”

※ संस्थेचा पता ※
न्यु डॉक्टर हाऊस,
डॉ. आंबेडकर पुतळ्यामागे, बसस्थानाकाजवळ,
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News

- At a recent board meeting the Network of Maharashtra People with HIV (NMP+) adopted new Human Resources and Finance Policies, as well as a Communications Strategy, and Communications Style Guide. Information about how these **improvements in our governance** will affect all of us will be communicated gradually over the next few months
- Pravin Salunke has sent out details of **bank lending schemes** that might help positive people. Districts should approach the banks in your area and start discussions about the needs of positive people as individuals, and in groups such as income generation groups. Most banks have Small Scale Industries Schemes, Agricultural Schemes, and give house loans. Please contact Pravin if you need any advice
- districts need to send in a **Legal Case Study** each month. These are analys to show the greatest problems, issues and needs facing positive people
- The working relationship between NMP+ and the **Human Rights Law Network** continues with the first legal advice column (see next page). They are also pursuing the right for 2nd line treatment in the Bombay High Court.

Jalna network fight stigma

The Jalna network has its own unique way to show there is no need to fear positive people. They have set up a drinking water table outside their office so that people can ease their thirst with a drink of good water.

The Good Samaritan act will remain in place through the hot summer.



Ahmednagar PTE awards

Ahmednagar District has made an award for excellence to two Peer Treatment Educators. In a month of hard work the two volunteers made 32 client home visits.

Below, President and DLN officer Ravindra Tokekar, centre, presents awards to Pandurang B Dighe and Vishwanath Aamale.



Female sex workers; own forum

Positive female sex workers in Maharashtra now have their own forum. At a recent meeting at NMP+ offices, the forum was established and a board chosen. They will meet quarterly. There are 7 board members, from Raigad, Sangli and Pune. Included on the board as an Executive Member is NMP+ board member Prema Khandagle. Prema can be contacted at the NMP+ offices for more information.

More news

- Pune, Bhandara and Sangli districts all achieved more than 100 **outreach visits** this month.
- All districts were represented at a Six C meeting at Pune INP+ offices this month. Each district is asked by the INP+ Action Group to contact their member of parliament and ask them questions on how they have treated the need for greater TB control. They will be asked about six areas including use of Communication, Capacity building, and how well informed they are themselves about TB.

Avahan 'captured'



The Avahan project which helped NMP+ develop its advocacy and capacity is coming to a conclusion. The project also helped Kolhapur District to develop as a model network. There will be a meeting in Chennai at the end of April to discuss ways of consolidating the improvements.

The project has been captured in photographs by eminent photographer **Shaju John**. He was commissioned by INP+ and Family Health International to produce a photography book. The book will have 100 images of positive people from different states. This includes Mumbai, Panvel, Ratnagiri, Solapur, Kolhapur, Aurangabad, Beed, Osmanabad and Ahmednagar districts of Maharashtra. It will show positive people from a variety of backgrounds living happily, to motivate others to live with dignity. Photos from the project will go on display in Chennai on 28th of April and will tour to other cities including Mumbai and Pune. The book will be published later this year.

Above: one of the images from the book. We will publish another in next month's newsletter.

Women - claiming your ancestral property

Today NMP+ is delighted to bring the first of a series of legal advice columns from the **Human Rights Law Network (HRLN)**. They are happy to take further queries on legal matters using the contact details below.

Women are entitled to inherit ancestral property from their parents in the same way as their brothers (Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act 2005), regardless of their marital status. Women can face difficulties enforcing this right because of society's attitudes towards women inheriting property, and these are magnified when the woman is HIV positive.

Women also face problems because it is harder for them to get the documents they need to prove their claim to the property. No specific documents are required by the legislation, but the following will help strengthen a woman's case:

- 7/12 extracts (property details, for agricultural land in rural areas, available from the Land Records Department)
- Property Card (property details, for urban areas, available from the City Survey Office)
- Electricity/Water/Telephone bill
- Any document containing a description of the property
- Proof of residence ID
- Proof of marriage (e.g. invitation card, photographs of the marriage)
- Affidavits of the facts about the property and the woman's share

Women wanting to pursue a property claim should bring as many of the above documents to the lawyer as they can, so the lawyer can present the best case possible.

Please contact the HRLN Nagpur unit for further information and any legal advice:

Nagpur HRLN Phone: 0712 2543273. **Address:** Human Rights Law Network, 51-B, Mata Mender Road, Alliance Church Building, Gokulpeth, Nagpur 440010. **Email:** hrlnnagpur@gmail.com

Districts sign up



Representatives from every district in Maharashtra gathered at the NMP+ offices to sign a Memorandum of Understanding for the coming year. They are pictured with Kabilan Annadurai, recently appointed ACT Programme Officer for INP+. He sits in the middle row between Balaji Ubarhande and, to his left, NMP+ board members Vaishali Naik and Rajesab Pendhari.

Star of the month ☆

Star of the month is the Dhule network for their innovative phone helpline (see front page). They also achieved their highest ever enrollment, 102, and did some outstanding outreach follow-up work.

Please send pictures, contributions or suggestions for the newsletter to Vincent McDonald, Communications Adviser, at vjmcd@hotmail.co.uk, or to NMP+, 401-403 Ganga Prestige Arcade, Nana Peth, Laxmi Road, Pune 411002, e mail: nmpplus@gmail.com, phone: 020 – 26336084/87