



PLUS

March 2009

Please give us 2nd line

The Human Rights Law Network (HRLN) is helping our campaign to make access to second line treatment easier. The lawyers from HRLN will bring a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) to the high court in Mumbai. The PIL asks that all those in need of 2nd line drugs be provided with them free of cost. At the moment, people who need 2nd line treatment are refused for a number of fairly trivial reasons that are not based on medical need. These reasons include;

- have been on first line for less than two years
- have previously paid for ART treatment
- have a rise in CD4 count however small
- are not resident in Mumbai

We have a list in NMP+ of over 80 people who need 2nd line. Some of these people will die because they will not receive treatment in time. We hope that the PIL will be presented to the court within the next 2 weeks.

World TB Day 24th March

Representatives from the Pune and Maharashtra networks together with other NGOs in the HIV and health fields attended a rally in Pune on World TB Day. The rally was to focus attention on the dangers of TB and the need to treat it quickly and properly. There is a particular danger for positive people who catch TB.

Yuvraj Shinde from NMP+ and Mahendra Sonawane from NPP+ told the assembly of the need for treatment for Multiple Drug Resistant (MDR) TB to be more easily available, and of the need for health workers to ensure patients had adequate nutrition as well as medicine. On the same day it was announced that a new State TB Training and Demonstration Centre will be operational and providing free MDR treatment in Pune within one year. At the moment the only centre is at Nagpur. The work for setting up the facility has already started at Aundh civil hospital. Besides Pune, it will cater to patients in Satara and Solapur. Later, it will expand its services to other cities in Western Maharashtra.

See also 'TB Treatment' on the following page.

International Women's Day



Staff from the CHAHA project held a day of events for women with the aid of a grant from Alliance India through Mamta.

The main focus of the gathering of over 30 women was the documentary film "Mulgai vayat yatana (On the Horizon of Adulthood)".

The film gave information on gender, and:

- adulthood and the menstrual cycle
- problems of adolescents.
- role and responsibilities of parents
- sex and sexuality
- high risk groups with HIV.

Some women were so impressed with the film that they asked if it could be shown in their own communities.

Left: women watch the film with great attention.

TB treatment

TB (*Mycobacterium tuberculosis*) kills more people than HIV. 40% of Indians carry the TB virus. They have an immunity to their own virus. However, unhygienic practices, particularly spitting, spread the disease. TB is 100% curable if detected and treated early enough. Treatment is a 6 month course of medicine. Medicines are free but some people fail to finish the course, so a generation of drug-resistant virus has developed. As with HIV, people need **good nutrition levels** to fight off the disease, and **information** so that they understand how vital it is to finish the course.

Someone who has both HIV and TB is said to be co-infected. People with HIV respond to TB treatment the same as anyone else, but they have higher risks of recurrence and death.

Tuberculosis can be expected to develop in more than half of those who are infected with HIV.

What should people with HIV do about TB?

- Increase your immunity with exercise and yoga.
- Keep up good nutrition levels.
- Seek medical help for any throat or chest complaint.
- Have a TB test every 6 months.
- Do not spit.

Parbhani condom encouragement

Staff at Parbhani have been working with the Hindustan Latex Family Planning Promotion Trust (HLFPPT), a social enterprise, to convince pan sellers to stock condoms. They start by showing the stall holders how to tell a good quality condom, and offer good supplies at a fair price.

Pan shops are a good place to stock condoms as they are open late and there are many of them in every district. The shops have been provided with colourful signs to show they are stockists. HLFPPT have opened well over 5,000 new condom outlets in high risk areas of Maharashtra since they started their programme.

Further information from Sanju Kale, district social worker, sanjuhawa@rediffmail.com

ASHA helps women get income

A government scheme can give employment to women in Maharashtra. ASHA (Accredited Social Health Activist) is a job open only to women under the National Rural Health Mission.

Each community will be allocated one ASHA, a health activist who will create awareness on health, nutrition, hygiene, good birth practice, breast feeding and so on. She will be a promoter of good health practices. She will also provide simple primary care for some ailments, and make timely referrals to health centres and hospitals.

ASHAs will normally come from the community they are supporting, and will be given training and other support. They will cover a community of about 1,500 people, and will need to work between 2 and 4 hours each day. ASHAs will usually be aged 25 to 45, with a minimum education level of 10th pass. Pravin Salunke can give more details, or see: <http://mohfw.nic.in/NRHM/asha.htm>

HB testing

The Pune PLC organised an Anemia Eradication Camp in Bhosari, Pune, on the 9th March for International Women's Day.

All the PLC staff took part, working in cooperation with the Dagdushet Halwai Women's Self-help Group. Emcure Pharmaceuticals provided the medicines. 213 mainly women and children were given HB blood tests.

Of the 213 attending, 193 were anemic or border anemic. These were seen by the PLC's Dr Bhise for a health checkup and medicine, either on the day or the next day. **Below**, Dr Bhise advises a patient



Keeping track

The Ahmednagar District has found an excellent way to keep track of developments. A huge wall map has been drawn to show all the Talukas in the District. In each Taluka symbols show the locations of hospitals, ART centres and Integrated Care and Treatment Centres. There are also totals of people on ART and Non ART.

In commending this work, Management Information Officer Ashwini Gujar asks that all districts follow the good example of Ahmednagar and produce their own wallcharts.

Below: the symbols and a section of the map showing Shevgaon and Pathardi Talukas.



News

Positive orphanage

There are two new orphanages for positive children opened by the Saryoday Foundation in Akola and Pune. The orphanages will take orphans or single parent children, but are unable to house parents. For information contact Pravin Salunke at NMP+, contact details at foot of page.

M & E visits

The final M & E visit will take place by the end of March, completing the programme which has brought help and advice to every district over the last three months.

Health insurance

Visits this month for CD4 testing were Beed (DLN and PLC), Jalgaon, Kolhapur, Pune (DLN and PLC), Sangli, and Satara.

So far a total of 729 tests have been carried out.

Stars of the month ☆

This month there are a number of star performers to be congratulated.

The top star is the Solapur District. Their client enrollment is 85 new clients in the month of February, the highest in Maharashtra.

Close behind is the Pune district, who made an astonishing 198 outreach visits to people's homes, for counselling, adherence, referrals, defaulter tracing and other reasons.

Also given honourable mentions for their outreach performance in February are Sangli and Ahmednagar districts, who each visited 100 people on outreach.

<http://vivah.aarogya.com> is a new marriage website for people in Maharashtra. It is designed to bring people with medical conditions together (it can be used by people with disabilities as well as positive people). It is easy to enroll online, or by hard copy for those who have difficulty using the web. Hard copies of the registration form are available to download: [registration form](#) and email it to info@aarogya.com or post it to T-Edge Solutions Pvt. Ltd. 301, Lloyds Chambers, Bldg. 2, 409, Mangalwar Peth, Pune 411011. India.

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

Deadline: 25th day of each month