



PLUS **AGM 14.11.09**

October 2009

Network of Maharashtra People with HIV

PFI sets up meeting between NMP+ and NACO

NACO's ART Consultant Rekha Jain is to meet the NMP+ board and some staff members at the PFI office in Mumbai on 3rd November. The meeting has been set up by Rohini Gorey, the PFI State Coordinator for Maharashtra. PFI is the Population Foundation of India, the principle channel for ACT funds to NMP+ and the districts.

The most pressing item on the agenda as far as NMP+ is concerned is the urgent need for implementation of the High Court agreement to provide free 2nd line to all who need it. NMP+ will also be looking for information on Alternate First Line, which was due before the end of September. Districts have been asked to let Yuvraj Shinde know of any issues they would like the board to raise with Ms Jain.

Below; Ronini Gorey from PFI at the 18th Quarterly Progress Report meeting for ACT at the Centurion Hotel, Piranagut, Pune. She is working on the report from Mahadev Shitole, Social Worker, Osmanabad.



Nashik child melava



Pictured above, some of the 40 children and their carers who attended a one day melava organised by the Nashik district and Nashik and Mahindra AAS Centre. While the children played games, the parents and carers were given talks on treatment and care.

HLFPPT to work with NMP+, districts

NMP+ is in discussions with Hindustan Latex Family Planning Promotion Trust (HLFPPT), to explore ideas for increasing positive prevention. In particular, the possibility of a joint scheme to market subsidised condoms. Another is the possibility of decorating the walls in the approach to the NMP+ office with murals encouraging condom use and other appropriate messages.

HLFPPT is funded by agencies like USAID, DFID, and the Indian Government. Its parent organisation Hindustan Latex is India's largest manufacturer of condoms.

Thanks for your support for the HIV/AIDS Bill

Thank you to **Amravati, Beed, Jalgaon, Kolhapur, Latur, Mumbai, Nashik, Nagpur, Sangli, Satara, Solapur, Thane, and Yawatmal** for collecting signatures in support of the attempt to get the government to pass the HIV/AIDS Bill. If passed in the form that NGOs including NMP+ are asking for, it will be the most significant advocacy success in the history of the virus in India.

We collected over 3,000 signatures altogether, with **Jalgaon** the clear winner at 700. Both **Kolhapur** and **Mumbai** collected over 400.

We are sending the signatures (pictured below) to the Lawyers Collective in Mumbai, who will present them to parliament in Delhi.



Help us with advocacy

We need your help with the campaigns to get free treatment for all who need 2nd line ART, and to end discrimination at ART centres.

This is what we need you to do. Help the client write a letter in which they describe the discrimination or maltreatment received. The letter must be signed and dated. Help clients to fill in details such as name of the hospital, and name of the person who was guilty of the bad behaviour.

Present a copy of the letter to the hospital, preferably on the same day or soon after. Send a copy of the letter to NMP+, and file a copy at the district.

Thank you for your help. Together we can make things better.

MOU debate long overdue

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between States and the Indian Network of People with HIV (INP+) is ripe for revision, now that the state networks are reaching maturity. The original version does not reflect the status of the state networks, and also contains grammatical and other errors. A number of states including NMP+ have produced a revised draft, which has been sent to INP+ for their comments.

Meanwhile, a revised draft of the MoU between NMP+ and the districts has also been prepared. Representatives of all districts discussed the revised draft on the 8th October. Since then, each district board has been considering the draft and is sending its comments to NMP+ for inclusion in a final version.

Pathway extended for a further year

The Pathway project at NMP+ has been given a funding for a further year. Pathway, managed by Dipti Ghone, has 8 peer educators who work in 11 communities in Pune, as well as a mobile van that takes health services direct to communities.

Pathway works with adults and makes linkages to other sources of help. It is funded by the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention.

Speed up legal cases

We are advised by the Human Rights Law Network (HRLN) that there is a legal remedy for any positive person engaged in a long drawn out lawsuit. If you or anyone you are counselling has such a problem, such as a property dispute, you should:

1. go to a lawyer such as the local HRLN or Lawyer's Collective contact
2. ask the lawyer to request a judge to expedite the case because the client has a critical illness
3. if the judge does not help, contact HRLN again and ask for assistance

Vaccine disappointment

The first Aids vaccine to show an encouraging result in trials is only modestly effective and did not protect those at highest risk of HIV. The announcement last month that the controversial trial carried out in Thailand had been successful took experts by surprise and sparked excitement around the world.

However, the full results, presented at the Aids vaccine conference in Paris and published online by the New England Journal of Medicine reveal:

- The vaccine did not protect those at high risk such as sex workers and intravenous drug users.
- The protective effect was greatest in the first 12 months and then seemed to diminish
- When those who did not get all six vaccine shots were taken out of the analysis, the positive result was statistically insignificant.

Seth Berkley of the International Aids Vaccine Initiative said he thought the regime would be taken no further. "We don't have a vaccine on the horizon. That's why we have to have the patience for this marathon rather than a sprint."

NREGA for positive people

Please do not forget that the Supreme Court ordered earlier this year that all panchayats and state governments have to include positive people in the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGA). This guarantees 100 days paid employment a year. Please apply to your local panchayat for more information.

Parbhani AGM

The Annual General Meeting was held at Parbhani District Network 10th October 2009. There were 140 members attending, with 12 candidates standing for election to the board. For the first time the election was arranged by blocks to ensure representation from all parts of the district.

The new board is; President, Babita Ramesh Charan; Vice President, Someshwar Sadashiv Galbe; Secretary, Devanand Lulaji Raybole; Joint Secretary, Bandu Balsaheb Parve; Treasurer, Maroti Munjaji Nandure; Executive members, Shivaji Dattarao Duckh, Anant Ganesh Samale, Udhave Shenkerbuaa Puri, Eknath Sesherao Dandane.

Pune district website

Congratulations to Pune district, the first network in Maharashtra to have their own website. It carries news about their recent activities such as a Peer Treatment Educator course. Have a look here: <http://www.networkofpunepypeoplelivingwithhiv.blogspot.com/> Meanwhile, NMP+ is developing its own website which is scheduled for launching before the end of November.



Star of the month ☆

This month's star is from the CHAHA project. We thank the Sangli Mission Society - Dilasa, Kolhapur branch, for their excellent management information and documentation, office set up, and outreach activity.

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