



PLUS AGM 17.12.09

November 2009

Network of Maharashtra People with HIV

NMP+ present to national conference on 2nd line

Manoj Pardeshi, General Secretary of NMP+, has presented the Maharashtra experience of struggling to get free 2nd line drugs for all at a national conference in Delhi.

The conference was arranged by ITPC India, a consortium of people with HIV and their supporters, including doctors and lawyers, who are fighting for better treatment including free 2nd line for all. NACO Initially started 2nd line in 2008 at two sites including JJ Hospital, Mumbai. This was expanded to 10 centres in January 2009. A provision was made for providing 2nd line to 3,000 by the end of 2009. But as of March 2009, only 344 patients were receiving the drugs. The slow scale up for provision of 2nd line is increasingly a concern for positive people in India. Also of great concern are the criteria for receiving 2nd line imposed by the government. Positive people whose condition had deteriorated so that that they were unable to wait for government-provided 2nd Line, and sought treatment in the private sector, are not allowed to switch to the government programme unless they are “below poverty line”. Others who have been under treatment for less than 2 years in government ART centres are also barred.

The rationale behind such conditional access seems to be rationing, limiting the number of people who can access treatment.

Manoj Pardeshi told the conference of our efforts including use of FIR, State Public Hearings, and public interest litigation. In August 2009, NACO lawyers told High Court judges in Mumbai that they would provide free 2nd line for all. NACO have since refused to honour that pledge.

Wardha skill building

Wardha PLC ran a skill building course to help people who want to make an income for themselves. The skills taught included stitching saris, using the sewing machines provided by the Inner Wheel club and Rotary Clubs of Wardha. The two machines they provided will remain at the PLC for use by clients whenever they want.

It was a busy month for the PLC, they also organised a trip for children on Children’s Day, 14th November. It is celebrated on this day in India as it is also the birthday of Jawaharlal Nehru. **See photos below**



HLFPPT visit NMP+

The decoration of the walls on the approach to the NMP+ offices is to be the first visible signs of the partnership between NMP+ and the Hindustan Latex Family Planning Promotion Trust (HLFPPT). The two organisations are exploring ideas for increasing positive prevention and promoting the use of condoms. The walls should be painted within the next few weeks. If the paintings are a success, it is hoped that district offices will also benefit.

HLFPPT have also agreed to fund an organisation brochure for NMP+.

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

NMP+ Website now live!

The website is now live. It will be officially launched at the NMP+ AGM on the 17th December. If you would like a preview, find it here:

www.nmpplus.net

PFI Meeting with NACO

NACO's ART Consultant Rekha Jain met NMP+ board members and staff at the PFI offices in Mumbai on 3rd November.

She told the meeting that NACO did not intend to implement the High Court order to provide free 2nd line medicines to those who need them. She said they were sticking with the original NACO guidelines.

The only concession she made was to agree to set up a committee to consider cases where people were not below the official poverty line, but were too poor to continue buying 2nd line medicines from NMP+.

Ms Jain told the meeting that they now hoped to roll out the much delayed alternative 1st line by the end of December.

We also had a useful discussion on some of the detailed problems districts had reported before the meeting.

Taal pharmacy, peer convention comes to Ahmednagar

The newest branch of Taal pharmacy opened in Ahmednagar in November. The pharmacist is Archana Kadus (**pictured below**) who many will remember as the first ever pharmacist at Pune.



Also in Ahmednagar, one of the series of Peer conventions being held in every district took place. The conventions are funded by INP+. On the 28 – 29 November the State Level Peer Convention with the theme of *Women and children* will be held in Pune. Also sponsored by INP+, there will be 80 attendees, including two from each district. **Below**; the banner from the Ahmednagar convention



Beed PLC media workshop

Beed PLC ran a press conference and media workshop in collaboration with the Nagpur branch of the Human Rights Law Network on the 7th November. They managed to get some good media coverage and advocacy work on problems facing positive people. **Pictures below**



News

- NMP+ has signed the Memorandum of Understanding with INP+ after some changes were made. A revised district MOU is also being prepared for signing next year, taking into account the changes required by districts.
- The Pune district, NPP+, are holding a marriage mela on the 12th December, 9 am to 3 pm, at Navi Peth, Pune,
- The ACT project is organising a rally in Pune for World AIDS Day.
- **World AIDS Day 1st December. Send us your event descriptions and photos for the next newsletter.**

Thane ACT team



The Thane team, from left, Sunil Jadhav, Sarita Kare, Jude Emmanuel, Front, Sandeep Sonawane

Parbhani ACT team



The Parbhani ACT staff. At the back, Left to Right, Bhikaji Khadap, Satyasheela Ugdhe, and Anant Samale. Front, Sanju Kale and Babita Charan, President.

Star of the month ☆

Jalgaon District, who in a splendid effort, collected over 700 signatures in support of the HIV/AIDS Bill. Over 4,500 signatures went from NMP+ to the Lawyers Collective who are organising the advocacy. 15 districts contributed.

Please send 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. Web: www.nmpplus.net