

July 2007

### Siyakhana hosts USAID

The US Agency for International Development (USAID) South Africa HIV Care and Treatment Technical Advisor, Melinda Wilson said the agency has “never been so well funded to make a difference” and had pledged to spend \$360 million in South Africa next year.

Wilson shared a number of successes and challenges that the USAID HIV /AIDS programme has encountered nationally, during a recent visit to the Siyakhana Project.

Siyakhana Project Manager Dr Simeon Odugwu welcomed Wilson’s interest in the project which is compelled to seek additional funding partners as its pilot phase reaches completion towards the end of this year.

Wilson said in 90% of instances USAID South Africa was able to partner with South African counterparts which reflected on high levels of governance and organisation within the country.

She lauded the intention of the Siyakhana Project to work closely with public sector health services.

### Where we are

In the current and upcoming quarter, the Siyakhana Project will focus on patient training and will hold two sessions in July and thereafter one a month.

For further details contact project assistant Wendy Hunter on 043 743 8438.

### Upcoming meetings

Our next focal person meeting takes place on 26 July 2007 at Hemingways Hotel.

### It starts with me

It is more than just Aid for Aids trainer Nombeko Nama’s tall frame that fills a room, it is her unequivocal sense that a response to HIV and Aids begins with each of us.

This is the challenge she shared with Buffalo City nurses during a recent training course organised by the Siyakhana Project in its effort to raise the bar on HIV and Aids awareness, counselling, testing, treatment, care, support and impact mitigation in Buffalo City.

“We believe the training provides a necessary component of Siyakhana work because we would like to support the public sector in ensuring that HIV positive people receive high quality care,” Siyakhana project manager, Dr Simeon Odugwu said.

Some 26 nurses from both the municipal clinics and private practices attended the training organised by the Siyakhana Project in its effort Nama said that irrespective of the working environment that nurses find themselves in, they need to engage in a personal pledge to provide the highest level of care to infected and affected people.

“Even though it was only a two day course I learnt a lot, especially to listen more to clients and guide them about their options rather than telling them what to do,” Buffalo City Municipality nurse Eartha King said.

Vatiswa Vuza also of BCM said she found the course fruitful and valuable in building on existing knowledge.

“The course was lovely and now I know that I need to counsel clients more and provide them with the information they want to know, so they make informed choices about their own lives,” Matsiliso Ngwendu who works in private practice said.

Aid for Aids has been a strategic partner of the Siyakhana Project since it began its work last year.



### In the Spotlight

The Siyakhana Project was positively received at the recent South African Aids Conference in Durban. Siyakhana’s Dr Simeon Odugwu presented a paper to a general session on the project and its achievements. He also presented to a South African Business Coalition on HIV and Aids (SABCOHA) breakaway session focused on business responses to HIV and Aids. “The project was rated as very comprehensive and our achievements in just 12 months impressive. The conference exposed us to possible linkages and partnerships which we are pursuing,” Odugwu said.

### SA Aids Conference Update

Eliminating HIV and Aids in infants is indeed one of the potentially realizable goals in South Africa within the short term, Professor Nigel Rollins of the Centre for Maternal and Child Health at KZN University said. 300 000 children become HIV infected each year through breastfeeding.

French public health professor Betran Auvert made an impassioned plea for men to consider circumcision to prevent HIV infection. For full details go to [www.said.co.za](http://www.said.co.za)

### Did you Know?

The Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) in the Western Cape has lauded a June 2007, Cape High Court interdict which ordered the Western Cape Provincial government and the Ministers of Health and Public Works and Administration to restore the reasonable functioning of health care services in Khayelitsha. Judge Desai found that health care worker dismissals in Khayelitsha disrupted the delivery of health services and that this constituted a violation of the constitutional right to access to health care services.

### Editorial

Thanks for the positive feedback we received for our first edition of the Siyakhana Project. We have had a busy two months and valued the opportunity to network with other organisations engaged in the fight against HIV and Aids at the Durban conference reported on above. As always we welcome your input on information that future editions should contain.

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