

Zuzimpilo reaches 2 600 HIV/Aids patients

Zuzimpilo Medical Centre which opened in November 2006 has attracted 2600 HIV/Aids patients that are paying towards a new model of partly subsidised healthcare.

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Zuzimpilo is an initiative of the Perinatal HIV Research Unit and is funded by USAID as a response to the increasing numbers of HIV/Aids patients who pose a major challenge to the roll-out of treatment, especially via the public health sector.

Zuzimpilo Medical Centre, the first of its kind in the country offers affordable, high quality healthcare for people living with HIV who cannot afford private sector HIV and ARV care but who are able to pay. It aims to support and assist the public health system by providing access to subsidised care.

Minister of Health, Barbara Hogan, today said, "Government's ability to respond effectively in terms of treatment is hampered by limited resources in the context of increasing numbers needing such treatment. The work of Zuzimpilo has our blessing and support as government and the Department of Health in particular. Initiatives such as Zuzimpilo give hope in our fight against HIV and Aids in our country."

Says Dr Motato Leshika, Project Director of Zuzimpilo Medical Centre, "We have managed to attract 2 600 patients and have started 1 200 of them on ARVs. 1400 are on our wellness programme. Each patient pays R350 toward the costs of their own ARV care instead of R1200 which they would need to pay if they went to private doctors."

As part of its expansion plans, Zuzimpilo has recently added a new wing, with more consultation rooms in addition to its offering which includes consultations by appointment, and a pharmacy on site that focuses solely on the treatment of HIV and Aids.

According to Andrew Passen, US Consul General, "We believe that it is not just the amount of money that makes PEPFAR (US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief) effective; it is the focus on partnership and the focus on results. We are proud of the results that Zuzimpilo is achieving, proud of the model that is being offered, and proud to be a partner."

Zuzimpilo is situated in central Johannesburg, on the 2nd floor of Ansteys Building, Cnr Joubert and Jeppe Streets. The clinic can be reached on 0860 467 456 or www.zuzimpilo.co.za

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