



MINISTER ADOPTS POLICY FRAMEWORK

An essential milestone for higher education institutions



Mr Patrick Semmonet of the European Commission; Dr Shaidah Asmall, Programme Director HEAIDS; Minister of Education Naledi Pandor; and Dr Theuns Eloff, chairperson of the board of HESA.

“Tonight represents the opening of a window of opportunity for higher education as a sector to renew and strengthen our commitment to responding to HIV and AIDS with the seriousness and the magnitude that the problem demands.”

With these words, the Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor, greeted the gathering of institutional representatives and stakeholders who had come to witness and support the adoption of the Policy Framework on HIV and AIDS for Higher Education in South Africa at the OR Tambo Southern Sun hotel in Gauteng on 30 October 2008.

Dignitaries included the chairperson of the Higher Education South Africa (HESA) Dr Theuns Eloff, Vice Chancellors including Professor Rachel Gumbe who acted as the programme director for the evening, and Mr Patrick Semmonet, representing the delegation of the European Commission.

The Policy Framework, which is one of the core components of the HEAIDS Programme, aims to guide institutions as they develop, define and operationalise their institutional strategies to mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS within the sector.

“The Policy Framework is a true milestone for us. It follows months of research, workshops and consultations with stakeholders across the sector. It is jointly owned by Higher Education South Africa (HESA) and the Department of Education,” explains Dr Shaidah Asmall, Programme Director of HEAIDS.

The Framework is more than a document; it is a road map which recognises that collectively and individually higher education institutions must act to prevent new HIV infections and to provide access to treatment, care and support for staff and students infected or affected by the pandemic. Mobilisation of leadership across the sector to drive and sustain responses to HIV and AIDS is the first specific goal of the Policy Framework.

Secondly, the Framework sets out to create healthy and safe environments for all members of the higher education community. It advises that this should be achieved by adopting a human rights-based approach in dealing with staff and students alike.

Thirdly, the Framework stipulates that the sector's activities must ensure that the sector plays an integral part in the national response to HIV/AIDS. Dr Asmall says that significant time and energy was spent on building a shared understanding of what types of activities are the responsibility of the national Education Department and HESA, as opposed to institutional level responsibilities and activities.

The Minister and Dr Eloff pledged support for the initiative on behalf of national structures, including the Department and HESA. It is now up to the educational sector to make use of the Framework, as we incorporate the implementation of the HIV and AIDS policy within each institution's overall strategic, operational and reporting plans and activities.

HEAIDS would like to get your feedback regarding the Policy Framework – as well as any other aspect of our programme. For copies of the Framework, speak to your institutional HIV and AIDS coordinator, or email magda@hesa.org.za ■

CONTENTS

World AIDS observed

We showcase some of your World AIDS Day activities on campus, whether they be HIV-testing, dialogue or community outreach.

Page 2

Sero-prevalance studies at campus on track

Approximately 18 000 of the 25 000 targeted students and staff at higher education institutions have participated

Page 2

Fort Hare students take to the streets.

Page 2

More information about our mission, goals and programmes is available on our new website at www.he aids.org.za

1 DECEMBER 2008:

Leadership and Unity to Stop HIV, AIDS and TB

South Africans observed World AIDS Day on 1 December under the theme “Leadership and unity to stop HIV, AIDS and TB”. The slogan was adopted by the South African National AIDS Council and its partners, who seek to strengthen, demonstrate and sustain unity, partnership and leadership in the response to HIV/AIDS.

Nationally, this response was founded on the same principles as those that underpin the higher education's own strategy on HIV/AIDS: HIV can be prevented, and treatment works. Specifically, World AIDS Day called on communities and individuals to:

- Promote testing for HIV and TB.
- Support people living with HIV.
- Talk about preventing mother to child transmission.
- Talk about safer sex and what you can do to protect yourself and others from HIV.

(continued overleaf)

A NOTE ON HEAIDS

The Higher Education HIV/AIDS Programme is an initiative of the Department of Education undertaken by Higher Education South Africa. It is funded by the European Union under the European Programme for Reconstruction and Development in terms of a partnership agreement with the Department.

The content of this publication is the sole responsibility of HESA and HEAIDS and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union or the Department of Education.

CONTACT DETAILS

Tel : (012) 484 1134
Fax : (012) 484 1147
e-mail: he aids@hesa.org.za

CPUT SALUTES PEER EDUCATORS



From left: Head of the HIV/AIDS Unit Ashraf Mohammed, Senior Peer Educator of the Year Mandisa Mbuyazi, Dean of Students Cora Motale.

CPUT's HIV/AIDS Unit hosted its Fourth Annual Peer Education Awards Ceremony on 24 October where it recognised the outstanding work done by peer educators.

"Peer Educators are the pillars of HIV/AIDS education. They take the message across their age group," noted Cora Motale,

Dean of Students. She emphasised the group's unique position to positively influence the attitudes and behaviour of their peers, and to disseminate relevant and accurate information.

The winners were: Mandisa Mbuyazi (Senior Peer Educator of the Year); Dunyiswa Plaatjie (Peer Educator of the Year); Pearl Boltman (Peer Assistant of the Year); Sebenzile Mazula (Peer Facilitator); and Sibongseni Mposelwa (Role Model).

The Unit is currently recruiting Peer Educators for the 2009 academic year. Interested students can get more information by visiting the Unit's main office in Room 2.500A, Administration Building, Cape Town Campus, phoning 021 460 4253, or e-mailing mayongop@cput.ac.za (Source: www.cput.ac.za)

SERO-PREVALENCE STUDIES AT CAMPUS ON TRACK

Approximately 18 000 of the targeted 25 000 students and staff at higher education institutions have participated in the National Campus HIV prevalence randomized study that had been launched in August. The results of the study are expected to be available in May 2009.

The study was commissioned by the HEAIDS Programme not only to establish the prevalence rates of staff and students at the participating institutions, but to also assess the knowledge, attitudes, perceptions and behaviour related to HIV/AIDS.

HEAIDS programme director Dr Shaidah Asmall recently confirmed the importance of the outcome of this study. "It is likely that many assumptions are made about what university students and staff know about HIV/AIDS, how they handle their intimate relationships, and what they feel about HIV/AIDS. The survey will enable the educational sector and individual institutions to develop HIV/AIDS programmes that meet the unique needs and circumstances at every campus," she said.

At present the challenge for this study is to meet the target of 25 000 participants. To date testing had been done at 19 institutions, with a couple of institutions still outstanding. Testing at these institutions will commence early in 2009.

"We are very pleased with the wide participation to date and want to thank everybody for their co-operation. We encourage the staff and students at the remaining institutions to participate and help us to reach our targets early in 2009," Dr Asmall said.

Isolated delays in testing and data collection due to operational and logistical challenges have been reported, but these have been overcome in most instances. This study is unique and one of the largest yet undertaken in South Africa in this field. The outcome can be seen as an important milestone that will impact on in the country's and the educational sector's response to HIV/AIDS. ■

1 December 2008: Leadership and Unity to Stop HIV/AIDS and TB

(continued from page 1)

We recognise that the first week of December was already a time when our students have finished exams. Many have gone to visit family and homes, while staff was wrapping up their activities for the year.

Yet we hope that some of you were able to participate in national efforts to use World AIDS Day as an opportunity to mobilise awareness and participation among our students and staff on all matters related to HIV/AIDS. World AIDS Day events at institutions covered a variety of activities and included:

University of Stellenbosch held a World AIDS Day Gala Concert at Artscape: *More than Music and Lyrics* and a theatre performance, *Lucky the Hero*, with voluntary counselling and testing offered after the event.

Walter Sisulu University held wellness clinics at different sites. A candle light ceremony took place on 29 November and peer educators got together to discuss the World AIDS Day theme.

Mangosuthu University of Technology's Campus Health offered general wellness programmes.

At the **University of Pretoria** the Open Society Foundation for South Africa and the Centre for the Study of AIDS launched the *AIDS Review 2008, Balancing Acts*, written by Carmel Rickard.

Cape Peninsula University of Technology Bellville Campus and local community in partnership with Tabeisa, CPUT's HIV/AIDS Unit, participated in a series of events to mark World AIDS Day. Learners from five schools built a float at the CPUT Bellville Campus for a procession through surrounding neighbourhoods. A Thanksgiving ceremony took place at Bellville Campus, involving community leaders of various faiths, CPUT students and staff and the community.

Please send highlights and photographs from World AIDS Day activities at your campus to magda@hesa.org.za. We would like to feature them in our next edition of HEAIDSnews and on our new website, www.heids.org.za ■

FORT HARE STUDENTS TAKE TO THE STREETS TO BOOST HIV/AIDS AWARENESS

Students at the University of Fort Hare actively participated in an HIV/AIDS awareness campaign at the East London campus.



PRINT

SEND TO A FRIEND

UNSUBSCRIBE



Funded under the European Programme for Reconstruction and Development