



News

Expanding food aid for patients

The nutritional situation of many patients at Newlands Clinic has deteriorated in recent months. Since January 2014, around 400 of them have therefore been receiving food aid in the form of vitamin-rich porridge.

The nutritional situation in Zimbabwe is precarious, with around two million people suffering from hunger. Thanks to the support of the United Nations World Food Programme, malnourished patients at the clinic receive food aid in the form of staple foods such as maize. Unfortunately, in some cases this support is not enough. The antiretroviral drugs, which the patients have to take for their entire lives, stimulate the appetite. This gives rise to the danger of patients who are suffering from hunger stopping taking the medication. In the worst-case scenario, this can result in the therapy failing, and can lead to death over the medium term.

Since January 2014, Newlands Clinic has therefore been providing additional support to around 400 patients by handing out free supplies of e'Pap. The patients are selected based on an assessment of their overall condition. e'Pap is a type of porridge that is very rich in vitamins. It is pre-cooked, and very easy to eat. The ingredients include maize, soya, millet, sugar, salt and prebiotics, as well as a wide range of minerals and vitamins. e'Pap thus provides a good source of essential nutrients, and so contributes to effective HIV treatment.

Providing e'Pap to the 400 or so patients will cost CHF 40,000 for 2014 as a whole, and this will be financed by earmarked donations from two Swiss foundations. e'Pap is manufactured by Econocom Foods in South Africa. Throughout Africa, around 2 million portions are eaten every month.

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