



News

Ongoing expansion of vocational skills training programme

The vocational skills training programme that Newlands Clinic set up in June 2011 together with the organisation Africaid Zvandiri is being expanded further. In March 2014, a group of HIV-positive adolescents and young people suffering from depression started the programme for the first time.

A total of 60 HIV-positive adolescents and young people have taken part in the vocational skills training programme in the first two years since it was launched. As part of this project, they attend a course dedicated to a specific profession over several months, acquiring business skills and gaining practical experience in their chosen vocation. Our partner organisation Africaid Zvandiri then mentors the young people in setting up their own businesses.

This initial help is essential in a country where around 80% of the population is unemployed. Many of the young people are now self-employed, offering services in areas such as painting, hairdressing, baking and carpentry/joinery, while some have joined together to form small companies. This not only allows the young people to improve their financial situation, it also means that for the first time in their lives they have a purpose and prospects for the future.

Group for young people with depression

This assistance is now also to be offered specifically to young patients with depression. Newlands Clinic set up a psychosocial programme for young people in July 2013 to address the fact that many of them suffer from depression owing to their difficult situations and the lack of family support. As a result of this, these young people then often do not take their medication regularly, which can have serious repercussions: if they forget to take the drugs just once in three weeks, there is already a threat of resistance forming and the treatment failing.

Newlands Clinic has a psychologist who works together with a small team to offer individual sessions and group therapy. The adolescent corner on the Clinic grounds also gives the youths a place where they can meet and share their experiences with people their own age. Thanks to the vocational skills training programme, these young people now also have the possibility of getting a start in working life. The first group of 30 adolescents with a dual diagnosis of HIV and depression started in March together with a further 50 HIV-positive participants. They attend vocational courses at a college and are mentored in setting up their own business. The initial experience has been exceptionally positive.

Read more: www.africaid-zvandiri.org

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