Vihaan News
Monthly Newsletter | October 2016

Together we win!
The first National Review and Coordination Meeting of Vihaan was organised on 13th September in New Delhi. Secretary, N.A. Kang, IAS, Additional Secretary, NACO, inaugurated the meeting, reiterating the need to focus on key populations and announcing the plans to introduce task and finish a national programme for key populations and disגולstant courses. He shared that issues related to ART stock-outs and shortages in CD4 facilities, will be looked into and addressed, and by 1st December 2016 NACO aims to put a million PLHIV on ART.

An intensive thematic group discussions followed on issues such as, tracking lost to follow-up clients (LFU), early linkages of PLHIV with treatment and care, and enhancing social welfare linkages for PLHIV and link- ing key populations to care and support services. The discussions concluded in critical insights on each of the themes and drawing up of an action-plan. The action plan included major points such as, ensuring regular coordination meetings and data sharing, all TB positive clients to be linked with ART centres, and, linking family members who test positive with ART centres. Among the other NACO dignitaries who attended the meeting were, Dr. K.V. Channap Adarsh, Secretary, Dr. R.S. Gupta, Deputy Director General, CST, Dr. K. S. Sachdeva, Deputy Director General, Basic Services, and Dr. B.B. Rewari, NPO, ART, 16 officials from CST division of SACS and NACO, 19 Project Directors from SACS, 3 Regional Coordinators and stakeholders from Vihaan Sub Recipients partners and members of Alliance India. The NACO dignitaries acknowledged that Vihaan has demonstrated a successful partnership between governments, community based organizations (CSO) and NGOs, in providing care, support and treatment to PLHIV and highlighted the scope for improvement by strengthening HIV-TB collaboration, tracking back LFU and monitoring the trends of the same and most importantly importance of cleaning the data periodically, so that there is clarity of current coverage. Vihaan team will work on all the areas and report back to NACO.

Outreach e-Mpowered!
Vihaan is being digitized through a client management system called ‘eMpower’. It is a tablet based application being developed with support from IBM and Global Fund. The application will be utilised by almost 2000 frontline workers or outreach workers and peer counsellors under the program.
The first batch for the training of trainers was organised in Delhi on 9th and 10th September, 2016. Project managers and M&E officers from the sub-recipients of Vihaan from Delhi, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh attended the training. The pilot roll-out has already started in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh, with support from IBM and Global Fund. The application will be called ‘eMpower’. It is a tablet based application being developed with support from IBM and Global Fund. The application will be utilised by almost 2000 frontline workers or outreach workers and peer counsellors under the program.

From Denial to Triumph
On 13th September, the Karmanghat Aasha Jyothi HIV Positive People’s Welfare Society, Telangana, filed a petition to the Collector of Karimnagar in Prajavani. The petition highlighted the plight of PLHIV due to the persistent stigma against PLHIV resulting in the denial of surgery in government hospitals across Karimnagar. In response to the petition, the Collector formed a committee to investigate the matter and issued a circular to government hospitals for providing surgery and delivery services to PLHIV without any stigma and discrimination.

Shyam Rao is a daily wage worker in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. He was an ART patient when he suddenly developed side-effects that affected his vision due to which he discontinued with his medicines. He was in the Lost to Follow-Up (LFU) list for the last six months. After tracking him, the Vihaan ORW accompanied Shyam to the ART Center, where medical officers referred him to the ophthalmic department. After a thorough examination in the ophthalmic department, he was advised to visit Shankar Netralaya (eye hospital) for a surgery. Unfortunately, Shyam did not have the financial means to visit the hospital and undergo treatment. The ART counselling and the Vihaan ORW locally mobilized resources and gathered Rs.4,500. However, after another examination he was informed that he had to pay Rs. 70,000/- for the surgery which was extremely difficult for him as he did not have the finances or an ‘Arogyasri’ card (insurance, to undergo free eye surgery at the hospital).
The Vihaan CSC team organized for him to visit the Chief Minister’s Camp at Vijayawada where he received a letter from the Chief Minister to avail free eye surgery and an Arogyasri card. As a result of these initiatives undertaken by the CSC team, Shyam once again got back the life he hoped for. He received treatment that corrected his vision, enabling him to continue with his daily life and earn his living. He never misses ART anymore!
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Visions of hope
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Vihaan Updates
10, 55, 233 PLHIV registered and linked with care & support services
3, 96, 137 PLHIV and family members linked with social protection schemes
2, 08, 249 Lost to Follow-Up PLHIV tracked and returned to ART services
5, 77, 852 PLHIV screened for TB

(Through August 2016)
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On 1st September 2016, the Karnataka Aasha Jyothi HIV Positive People’s Welfare Society, Telangana, filed a petition to the Collector of Karimnagar in Prajavani. The petition highlighted the plight resulting from the denial of surgery to government hospitals for ART centres.

Among the other NACO dignitaries who attended the meeting were, Dr. K.V. Chamaraj Rao, Joint Secretary, Dr. R.S. Gupta, Deputy Director General, CDS, Dr. K. S. Sachdeva, Deputy Director General, Basic Services, and Dr. B.B. Rewari, NPO, ART, 16 officials from CBO division of SACS and NACO, 10 Project Directors from SACS, 3 Regional Coordinators, 15 State Coordinators, 19 participants from Vahan Sub Recipients and partners and members of Alliance India. The NACO dignitaries acknowledged that Vihaan has demonstrated a successful partnership between governments, community based organizations (CBO) and NGOs, in providing care, support and treatment to PLHIV and highlighted the scope of improvement by strengthening HIV-TB collaboration, tracking back LTFU and monitoring the trends of the same and most importantly importance of cleaning the data periodically, so that there is clarity of current coverage. Vihaan team will work on all the areas and report back to NACO.

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Together we win!
The Third National Review and Coordination Meeting of Vihaan was organised on 10th September in New Delhi, India. The objective of the meeting was to bring together key stakeholders including the national care, support and treatment (CST) programme and strengthen the coordination highlighting the need to focus on key populations and announcing the plans to introduce test and treat in a national programme for key populations and disadvantage groups. He shared that issues related to ART stock-outs and shortages in CD4 facilities, will be looked into and addressed, and by 1st December 2016 NACO aims to put a million PLHIV on ART.

An intensive thematic group discussions followed on issues such as, tracking lost to follow-up clients (LTFU), early linkages of PLHIV with ART treatment and care, and lost to follow-up (LTFU) clients to ART centres and support services. The discussions concluded in critical insights on each of the themes and drawing up of an action-plan. The action plan included major points such as; ensuring regular coordination meetings and data sharing, all TB positive clients to be linked with ART centres, and, linking family members who test positive with ART centres.

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Together we win!

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