

Himalayan Anti Aids & Anti Narcotic Drugs Society (HANDS)

Annual Report

2016-2017

The fight on substance abuse this year was carried out with a lot of zeal and enthusiasm, keeping in mind the day to day sufferings of the victims and the affected families. Like the global problem even in Kalimpong region, students and youth fall prey to their curiosity for the projected colorful life style of substance abuse and happen to experiment various chemicals. Hence HANDS has been engrossed in working specially amongst the affected youth be it at the day care centre, outreach work on the streets and the rehabilitation centre. HANDS has taken immense measures in reaching out to give awareness to the youth be it in schools, colleges and institutions and preventing vulnerable victims from the menace of substance abuse.

As the psycho spiritual disease of drug addiction and alcoholism requires a therapeutic residential long term treatment, HANDS team invests countless hours of rigorous hard work in carrying out all the activities like therapeutic inputs, counseling, study of 12steps program literature etc. This intense treatment module brings about the much needed transformation in all aspects of every inpatient making them respectable members of the society.

HANDS met the requirements of addressing preventative and curative measures in the following ways:

Preventative:

Like every year the youth of UCNi had organized a Counseling Seminar on Education and Life Ethics on 2nd April 2016 and HANDS has been a part of the program to make the youth aware of substance abuse and its ever growing problems globally, especially amongst the youth.

Saptashree Gyanpith School, a renowned ICSE school in Kalimpong had organized a parent and guardians seminar on vital issues such as substance abuse on 29th April 2016. HANDS team in particular talked to the parents and guardians about identification, intervention management and handling affected children and adolescents.

Commemorating International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking on the 26th June 2016, HANDS had organized a rally along with schools performing music at the heart of Kalimpong Town. Mobilizing other government and non Governmental organizations, Schools and institutions like The Police Department, State Bank of India, Axis Bank, Save the Hills, Yaka Foundation, Run with Roshni and Christian Motorcyclist Association. The gathering started the rally went around town and came back to the starting point where the present dignitaries gave motivating speeches and schools like Himali Bording School, Kurseong put up a musical show.

HANDS along with Cluny Sisters of Bal Suraksha Abhiyan (BSA) who work in the field of child abuse, have come together for a more affective and combined effort of combating both the vital social problems of substance abuse and child abuse as both the issues are interrelated. In most cases the parents of an abused child is a substance abuser. HANDS had tied up with BSA in an awareness program at Kagay High School near Pedong on the 20th September 2016.

HANDS has always been hand in hand with the Police department in every way to bring about welfare to the people. One out of the many is donating blood by all staff and volunteers organized by Kalimpong Traffic Police during the Traffic Safety Week on 26th November 2016.

In yet another Awareness program, HANDS team successfully conducted the seminar on substance abuse, especially Alcohol at Rambh Bazar, NH10 on 27th November 2016 as the people from the rural areas are more affected with homemade spirit. HANDS team stressed on the disease of alcoholism, its negative effects on the family and the society at large.

Like every year, HANDS does not let go of any opportunity in reaching out to the masses and bringing about help, support and solution. World AIDS day on 1st December has been exactly one of these international events where the staff and volunteers go out in crowd, ask two minutes of their time and passed the message of HIV/AIDS and its mode of transmission to each one of them.

HANDS had been invited as resource people in an Orientation Training for NSS Program Officers, organized by Empanelled Training Institution (TORC), Ramakrishna Mission Ashram, Kolkata on 22nd March 2017. The program was attended by over 40 NSS Guides/Teachers of north Bengal. Hands team successfully rendered an awareness presentation on indentifying and handling students on substance abuse.

Rotary Club of Kalimpong in association with HANDS had organized an awareness program at St Augustine's School, Kalimpong on 31st March 2017. St Augustine's School or SAS is a very reputed school in the national level and program of this kind was well taken by the students who were in their hundreds. The program was a complete success with very interesting questions at the end from the students and some even came for follow-up sessions to HANDS office after the program.

Curative:

The staff and patients of HANDS Rehabilitation celebrated 7th anniversary of the Center on 14th April 2016 with a well organized program performed by the patients. Mrs Kazim Tshering Bhutia, Member GTA, Mrs Munna Chettri, municipality ward counselor, other NGO's, HANDS Committee Members and families took part in the celebration.

In recognition to the tireless services rendered towards the community and the people of Kalimpong, Kalimpong Sports Association awarded HANDS a token of appreciation for successfully bringing back victims of substance abuse to main stream society on 15th August 2016.

As the ultimate goal of every patient in the rehabilitation center is to be a responsible and productive member of the society and nation at large the Rehabilitation Center observes national events like the Independence Day in full force only to inculcate a sense of patriotism and responsibility towards his family and nation.

For exemplary service to the people of Kalimpong and the entire region in the fight against substance abuse Rotary Club of Kalimpong awarded Rotary Vocational Excellence Award 2016 to HANDS on 21st September 2016 with their gratitude.

To make one feel at home and learn to celebrate festivals happily without the use of substance and Alcohol, HANDS celebrated Diwali festival in the Rehabilitation on 30th October 2016 with all merry making and dance including traditional dause.

In making every patient a responsible family member and respecting the social/religious beliefs of his family, HANDS celebrates all festivals and this time too, young members of the Christian Motorcyclist Association were kind enough to conduct the celebrations on Christmas 2016.

With more and more time spent in this field of prevention and treatment of chemical dependency, HANDS team has identified more effective measures in successfully carrying out preventative and treatment modules. Out of the various methods implemented, HANDS team saw the grave need of educating the teachers of schools and institutions in identifying, handling and helping the affected and prone students. It was found that Teacher student awareness program was as important as the family and patient combined treatment program and the response from the heads of institutions and teachers has been very fruitful.

More over the work at day care center amongst the home trial patients and ex patients has been going on constantly, providing practical support through counseling and monitored guidance in the outside world. As mentioned above the weekly family classes is a very successful program which has a vital positive impact in enabling a healthy environment for the patient after treatment.

All in all HANDS had a very demanding but fruitful year in its line of work cherishing its privileges of bringing about hope, strength and joy in the lives of the patients and their families.

The figures as per the performance chart and registers are as follows:

Rehabilitation Centre

Patients treated in the rehabilitation centre: 76

Chemically dependent: 28

Alcoholics: 37

Poly (Both):11

Total no of patients succeeded after discharge: 42

Out of which its categorized as (Alcoholics- 12, Chemically dependent – 28, Poly – 2)

The annual success rate of the rehabilitation centre in percentage is – 55.27%

Day Care / Drop in Centre

Patients treated in the Day Care Centre: 224 (out of which 48 individuals on a regular basis)

(Regular)Chemically Dependent: 37

(Regular)Alcoholics: 9

(Regular)Poly (Both): 2

Family Classes in Day Care Centre

Total No of family classes conducted on a weekly basis (every Saturday): 52

Total No of family members attending classes: 650