



Reg No:S/IL,41809

Activity Report 2020-2021

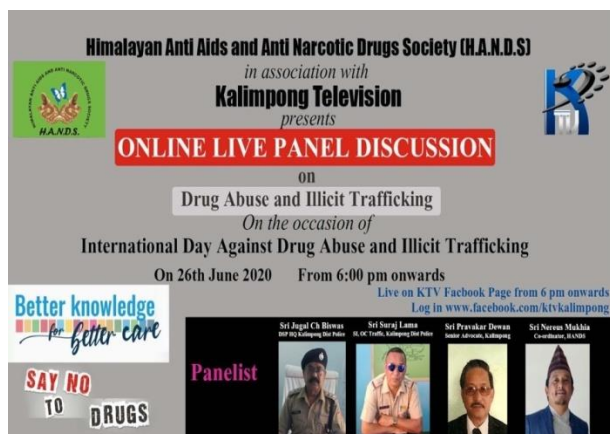
Himalayan Anti Aids & Anti Narcotic Drugs Society (HANDS)

Activities Report

2020-2021

1. International Day Against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking 26th June 2020

On the occasion of observing International Day Against Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, this year, HANDS in collaboration with Kalimpong Television (KTV) organized two sets of programs. Due to peak covid lockdown during this period, we had to resort to online medium and refrain from our regular mode of observing this day. So on the 26th of June, 2020, we had a webinar on local issues surrounding drug abuse and illicit trafficking in Kalimpong where a few selected key individuals from different walks of life were invited for an online live panel discussion with HANDS coordinator Mr. Nereus Mukhia on KTV. The key guests were Shri. Jugal Ch. Biswas, DSP Head Quarters and Shri. Suraj Lama, OC Traffic, Kalimpong District Police. All of them have been associated with combating drug abuse and illicit trafficking issues in Kalimpong for a while now. The online webinar was well received by locals with over 3000 viewership. Our second set of the program consisted of four-day series of testimonies that our patients, staffs and ex-recovered individuals had prepared. We showcased one testimony as an episode per day from 23rd to 26th June 2020 on KTV. In these testimonies, the individuals told their stories of drug abuse, their different experiences, difficulties, success stories, about the treatment (rehabilitations) they received or gave at HANDS and how they eventually became integrated back into the society.



Poster advertisement for Panel Discussion



DSP Shri. Jugal Biswas and Mr. Nereus Mukhia in KTV studio



Screenshot of one testimony series by HANDS patient Mr Nereus Mukhia at the live talk show

2. Awareness Program at Kalijhora, Kalimpong 28th June 2020

As a follow up to 26th June's International Day Against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking programme, HANDS conducted a one-day awareness program at Kalijhora along NH10 highway. HANDS collaborated with "Youth and Masses" of Kalijhora for this program where HANDS took some of its ex-patients (recovered) to give first-hand account/testimony to the youth, and made power point presentations to create awareness. The program was attended by some 200 local youth of Kalijhora who actively engaged with the HANDS's recovered patients with their questions and queries. Amongst guests, HANDS had invited the police representative of Sevoke Outpost – OC Pravin Gurung to interact with the youth.



OC Pravin Gurung, Mr. Nereus Mukhia, Mr. Jhalak Chettri, Mr. Palden Tamang



Mr. Prayukti Kumai



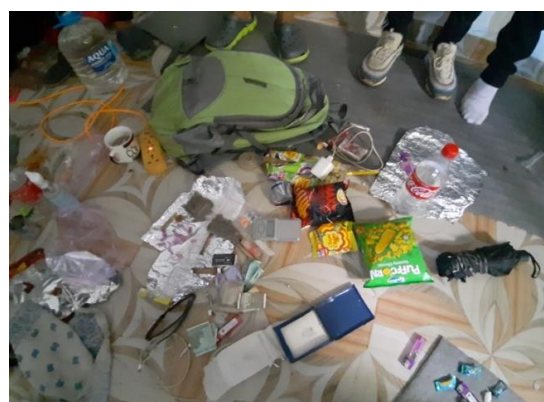
Local youth of Kalijhora

3. Prevention drive in containment of illicit trafficking with Milan Club, 7th Mile on 5th July 2020

HANDS in association with Milan Club members of 7th Mile, Kalimpong conducted an urgent intervention and awareness day program on the 5th of July 2020. The residents of 7th Mile, specially some of the concerned youth had major grievances of instances of drug abuse in their community, due to which, they had requested HANDS to urgently intervene. Seven young boys were given intensive awareness counselling on that day as they were found to be in possession of substances the same day. HANDS intervened and motivated them to seek help. Two of the seven boys then joined HANDS for rehabilitation and are well on their path of recovery.



The young boys into substance use in 7th Mile



Few substances recovered from one of the boy's bag

4. Independence Day Celebration at HANDS Rehabilitation Centre, Kalimpong on 15th August 2020.

Independence Day celebration is one of the most awaited celebrations of the year. This is because in Kalimpong, this day is celebrated by the public, school and college students including administrations with great pride, pomp and show. So patients in the rehabilitation centre looks forward to celebrating this day and we at HANDS try our best to make this day as entertaining and fun as possible for our patients and staff members. Not to let the patients miss what's happening in the world outside the rehab, we started the day as usual with marchpast for which our patients had been practicing for weeks. This was followed by flag hoisting and a day full of indoor games and sports in the form of mini tournaments such as carrom board, chess and tambolas. A special lunch is prepared for our patients and staffs on this day



Patients in their “attention” position



Carrom board tournament

5. World Aids Day on 1st December, 2020

On World Aids Day, 2020, HANDS approached Kalimpong Police to join force with them in greater dissemination and awareness of drug abuse and drug-abuse related aids issue arising from intravenous drug abuse in the region and its repercussions not just on the users but also their families, friends and society in general. So we went to the Police stations and meet the officers, we also meet other key local citizens and civil society of Kalimpong, local journalists and requested them to join hands with HANDS to fight against drug related incidences of aids.



SP Shri. Hari Krishna Pai, Kalimpong Police



Mr. Shamsher Ali and Mr. Sandeep Jain

6. Christmas celebration with Christian Motorcycles Association on 25th December, 2020

HANDS has always celebrated Christmas with members of Christian Motorcycles Association (CMA) who visit the rehabilitation center on the 25th December morning. The young members of CMA come early at 8 am and share the significance of Christmas with the patients – all of whom belong to diverse backgrounds. HANDS believe in religious diversity; and gives space and encouragement to its staffs and patients for the celebration of all religious and cultural festivals as celebrated in Kalimpong. Unfortunately, many such religious festivities could not be celebrated at the centre due to lock down. Since lockdown has been lifted by December, the CMA members brought with them cakes and other food items with the patients. They conduct pray for and with the patients, sang Christmas Hymns

making the environment in the rehabilitation centre very lively. The purpose of such visits is also to motivate the patients into believing that there is a life, fun and happiness without drug use.



CMA members and an inhouse patient cutting the Christmas cake



CMA members together Mr. Nereus Mukhia (extreme right) who is also a CMA member



Patients at the rehabilitation centre listening to the CMA members



Christmas decor made by the patients

7. Awareness along with Glen Family Foundation in Sundung and Pudung on 2nd March 2021.

On 2nd March 2021, HANDS in collaboration with Glen Family Foundation conducted a one day awareness against alcohol abuse and the ills associated with alcohol consumption amongst the youth and even young children. Often in rural villages, we focus more on alcoholism and its dependency in addition to substance abuse. We specially spoke about alcoholism dependency, preventive measures, its cure and its impact on the dependent alcoholic as well as their entire families including children. Around 50 children and youth attended this days workshop.



Mr. Palden Tamang, HANDS centre-in-charge
talking to the youth



Rajesh Diyali, HANDS Day care-in-charge

8. **Awareness in Kalimpong Collage during Kalimpong College Beauty Pageant on 1st March 2021.**

HANDS has always looked for new faces amongst the locals who can connect with the common masses and spread key awareness information in general. HANDS got an opportunity to work with students of Kalimpong College who were participating at the Kalimpong College Beauty Pageant 2021. The theme of this years pageant was substance abuse and HANDS helped all the student contestants understand this social ill, document it, what treatment HANDS provide, the efficacy of it, and so on. The documentary that the contestants had made was showcased on the final day of the pageant and also broadcasted on local Kalimpong channels, which had a mass outreach given the high viewership for the pageant and pageant winner.



2021 Kalimpong College Beauty Pageant Winner with HANDS staff

9. **Various Family Classes and Counselling**

Keeping in mind Covid pandemic and SOP precautionary measures, our regular family counselling classes which we used to earlier hold in one day was broken down and held in smaller groups on different days to avoid over-crowding. This enabled the HANDS staff to have family classes everyday thought the week. However, we did conduct a few big group classes. HANDS believes that family counselling via such interactive classes is an important step that goes towards the final rehabilitation of the patient when they are discharged. Given this, HANDS have always made family classes and counselling a mandatory part of the

patient's rehabilitation process. Smaller groups this time allowed us to interact more interpersonally than in big groups. In such classes, we explained to the family members what the patients are learning in the rehabilitation centers, how the patients must be handled/treated once they return back to their respective homes, how to deal with the patients at home, what the patients have to continue doing at homes and so on. We also cater to the needs of our patients who have been discharged but must continue to attend their follow up sessions at HANDS Day Care centre.



Family class taken by Mr. Palden Tamang



Family class taken by Mr. Yabesh Mukhia



Group Family Class led by Mr. Palden Tamang



Group Family class taken by Mr. Bidhan Pradhan

We also cater to the needs of our patients who have been discharged but must continue to attend their follow up sessions at HANDS Day Care centre.



Follow-up patients at the Day Care centre with staff Mr Nishal Pradhan

10. Sober Birthdays: Celebrating success in treatment and recovery of patients.

Another key HANDS activity is the celebration of sober birthdays of patients who have recovered well and have remained off any kind of substance use/abuse. We celebrate this as a successful milestone in the patients journey towards full recovery; and invite our past patients for a cake cutting ceremony followed by a good lunch. But there is much more to this. We celebrate these success stories to motivate and show our in-patients that staying clean of substance is possible, being productive and living a normal life is possible, being full-functioning members of the society is possible, integrating back into the society, community and most importantly their families is possible. We show our patients that they too can overcome their recovery processes and walk toward the path of healing, free from substance use.



Sober birthday celebration of past patients

11. Walk/free-time exercises

Apart from the regular classes/sessions at the rehabilitation centre such as group discussions, personal counselling, reading and writing that have been designed for patients, HANDS also added a few activities for the patients as a part of their recreations during these pressing Covid times such as patient-group-walks, supervised outings, vegetable gardening, gyming, and exercising for them to channel their energy and minds into their recovery.



Supervised morning walks of the patients



Jugad-gym of the patients

12. Covid-19 relief work

HANDS is one of the founding member of Kalimpong NGO Network (KaNGON) - a collective, autonomous organization of **22 registered NGOs of Kalimpong** that has envisioned to pursue its aims and objectives by building positive synergies and strategic partnership with the Government, other Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), Self-Help Groups (SHGs), other Community based Organisations (CBOs) at the local level to encourage, facilitate and promote more local-participation and community engagement in decision-making processes particularly concerning and combating the social ills within Kalimpong. And as a part of KaNGON, HANDS coordinator Mr. Nereus Mukhia and few other staffs stationed outside of the Rehabilitation Centre volunteered in numerous activities throughout the lockdown and post lockdown to provide services to the local people of Kalimpong.

Kalimpong was one of the first towns in North Bengal to have been hit by first Covid-19 detection and first fatality towards the end of March 2020, days before the country went on a full lockdown mode. In the absence of proper information about the precautions against the virus and the lockdown that was imposed by the government, HANDS in collaboration with other NGOs of Kalimpong raised donation to buy PPEs for the health care workers during the initial days of Covid-19 when PPEs were in shortage. These PPEs were bought from Siliguri and distributed amongst the health care workers, and other essential services workers for their protection. During peak lock down, HANDS and other NGOs again raised funds from amongst themselves and from the public to distribute basic food aids to poor and marginalized people who had been severely hit by Covid-19 lockdown. Massive amount of food items such as rice, lentils, oil, sugar, salt, spices, potatoes, onions, soybeans, hand sanitizer and masks were distributed both within the municipal areas of Kalimpong as well as the exterior villages of Kalimpong. HANDS coordinator Mr. Nereus Mukhia travelled throughout Kalimpong town with other NGOs to raise awareness about the importance of social and physical distancing, wearing of masks, and other sanitation habits that people had to emulate into their daily habits.



HANDS's voluntary work combating Covid-19 with KaNGON members across Kalimpong

These are some of the activities HANDS have undertaken in 2019-2020. HANDS had to cautiously cut down on many planned activities due to the safety issues concerning the in-house patients living in the Rehabilitation Centre. Hopefully, as and when we all rise from this pandemic to resume our daily lives without the scare, risk and threat from Covid-19, HANDS will resume with many of its activities that have been put on hold during this pandemic.

