



Reg No:S/IL,41809

Notes on Activities-I 2022-2023

Himalayan Anti Aids & Anti Narcotic Drugs Society (H.A.N.D.S.)

Annual Report

2022-2023

The year 2022-2023 was a remarkable year for Himalayan Anti Aids & Anti Narcotic Drugs Society (H.A.N.D.S.) in its endeavor towards combating the ills of substance addiction and abuse in Kalimpong District. H.A.N.D.S. undertook major substance addiction and abuse awareness programs across Kalimpong District, most of which was done in collaboration with and(or) support from the Kalimpong District Police. The keen concern and pro-active involvement of Kalimpong District Police and its officials have greatly aided H.A.N.D.S. to carry forward its work with more efficiency and credibility. A special, heartfelt vote of acknowledgement to the Superintendent of Police (SP), Kalimpong, Madam Aparajita Rai for leading some of the key initiatives such as Project 'SHUDDHI' for the underprivileged substance abuse victims; and working tirelessly to protect Kalimpong and its public from the risk and negative impacts of substance abuse and addiction. Under Madam, Aparajita's lead, H.A.N.D.S. also became the beneficiary of a CSR donations worth Rs. 800,000 from a Kolkata based organisation – Super Shakti Foundation, which has helped many substance abuse victims from economically weaker backgrounds. Sufficed to say that with Madam Aparajita's dedicated involvement in fighting against substance addiction and abuse that plague our community in Kalimpong, H.A.N.D.S. has gained a great ally and support from the Kalimpong Police Department. The entire staff, volunteers, and in-house patients of H.A.N.D.S. extend our genuine gratitude to the entire Kalimpong Police Department, and especially to the SP, Madam Aparajita Rai and the SI, Madam ShovnaSewa.

We have briefly outlined some of the activities that H.A.N.D.S.undertook in the year 2022-2023, individually and in collaboration and partnership with the Kalimpong District Police Department and other local organizations based in Kalimpong. This is in addition to year-round treatment to victims of substance abuse provided at the H.A.N.D.S. Rehabilitation Center at Chebo Busty in Kalimpong

1. Kalimpong District Superintendent of Police's 1st visit to H.A.N.D.S.Rehabilitation Center on the 2nd of April,2022.

A visit to H.A.N.D.S. Rehabilitation Center at Chibu Busty, Kalimpong by one of the most concerned, proactive, and visionary Superintendent of Police (SP) that Kalimpong district has had so far. The honorable SP, Madam Aparajita Rai, who has worked selflessly and tirelessly against substance abuse and its illicit trafficking in her previous other postings as well, visited the in-house patients at the Rehabilitation Center, interacted with them -- motivating them to take the treatment seriously and to successfully make comeback to main-stream society.

2. Participation at Nepali New Year Rally on the 14th of April, 2022.

In-order to build confidence in the in-house patients undergoing intensive treatment at H.A.N.D.S.'s Rehabilitation Center and facilitate their smooth integration back into society, occasionally H.A.N.D.S.'s staff members take the in-house patients to attend and participate at public events in and around the region. Such activities are undertaken to make the in-house patients learn how to enjoy public events without the use of substances. One such public event, i.e. a rally in celebration of Nepali New Year – 2022, was held in Kalimpong town on the 14th of April, 2022, where their in-house patients participated in the rally led by the then Center in Charge Mr. Palden Tamang along with other senior and follow-up patients of H.A.N.D.S.

3. Special session by psychotherapist at the Rehabilitation Center on the 15th of April, 2022.

H.A.N.D.S. organised a one-day mental health therapeutic classes with the Psychotherapist Madam Srijana Kumai, with whom, the in-house patients had a daylong session at the Rehabilitation Center. The main objective of this one-day class was to help the in-house patients identify key issues hampering their full concentration and effort in their ongoing de-addiction treatment.

4. Awareness Program at St. Augustine's School, Kalimpong on the 21st of April, 2022.

H.A.N.D.S. and the Kalimpong District Police conducted an effective awareness program for the senior student of St. Augustine's School, Kalimpong. The Superintendent of Police (SP), Kalimpong District, Madam Aparajita Rai herself was present along with the Sub-Inspector, Madam Shovna Sewa and Coordinator of H.A.N.D.S., Mr. Nereus

Mukhia to interact with the students. The awareness program was well received by students and the school administration who were attentive and responsive displaying effective understanding.

5. Organisation of Skateboard Competition on the 24th of April, 2022.

Kalimpong District Police together with one of the local youth organisation, K-Town SK8DOWN and H.A.N.D.S. organized a first of its kind local skateboard competition in Kalimpong town. Skateboarding is quite in vogue in Kalimpong town amongst the youth and teenagers, attracting their interest, attention, and focus. Seeing that as an opportunity, the Kalimpong District Police, and H.A.N.D.S. partnered to provide a platform for the youth and teenagers to encourage them to hone their interest. At the competition, there was high turn-out, with large number of youth and teenagers gathering at the venue and participating. The H.A.N.D.S. members got a golden opportunity to identify, interact and conduct intervention counseling to the assembled youth and teenagers, preventing them from going astray. A few attended and showed-up for follow up counselling with H.A.N.D.S. members.

6. Launch of Project 'SHUDDHI' on the 30th of April, 2022.

A flagship program, 'SHUDDHI' was launched by the Kalimpong District Police, in partnership/collaboration with H.A.N.D.S. that directly engages with the youth of Kalimpong district, with the objective of sensitizing them about the ills of drug abuse and addiction including provide free treatment for six and a half months at H.A.N.D.S. Rehabilitation Center. The treatment is fully funded by Kalimpong District Police to the needy, marginalized victims of substance/drug abuse who cannot afford the treatment cost. District of Kalimpong has been blessed with being only the second district in the entire West Bengal State to be granted the 'SHUDHDI' project and that very day, 10 patients were admitted at the rehabilitation center through this initiative.

7. Major monthly Staff & Clinical Meetings held on the 5th of May, 2022.

The staff and volunteers of H.A.N.D.S. Rehabilitation Center hold regular monthly meetings on every first Thursday of each month to discuss the how the Center is faring, the progress of the in-house patients and other day-to-day issues in making the Center run efficiently and effectively. The Rehabilitation and Day Care in-charge provides a detailed

monthly report of every individual in-house as well as follow up patients and a clinical review is also done to better understand the patient's progress during the treatment period.

8. H.A.N.D.S. Annual General Meeting held on the 13th of May, 2022.

Keeping up with the requirements and regulations of the organization, H.A.N.D.S. held its 18th AGM under the Presidentship of Mrs. Sharda Mukhia which was attended by 70% of its Board Members. The Board members were appraised on the day-to-day functioning, recovery rates, and the challenges that H.A.N.D.S., its staff, volunteers and in-house patients face including the family members of the patients. The Board members pledged to their continued support and help to the organization.

9. Awareness Program at Rockvale Academy, Kalimpong on the 23rd of June, 2022.

H.A.N.D.S. along with Kalimpong District Police conducted an awareness program for the students of Class 10 and above at Rockvale Academy (school), Kalimpong. The SP of Kalimpong Police, Madam Aparajita Rai spoke extensively on the "trap of curiosity" for the various substances that the youth often fall into, leading to its addition and abuse. Sub-Inspector Madam ShovnaSewa and Coordinator of H.A.N.D.S., Mr. Nereus Mukhia addressed various queries and questions from the students. The awareness program was well received by the students including the principal of Rockvale Academy, Captain Mr. Prakash Pradhan. The Program ended with gratitude expressed by the principal on behalf of his students.

10. Celebration of International Day Against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking on the 26th of June, 2022.

The 26th of June i.e. the declared International Day Against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking, also being the H.A.N.D.S.'s Foundation Day, the staffs, volunteers and in-house patients including the Board members celebrated the 18th Foundation Day at the Rehabilitation Center. The Board Members met and interacted with the in-house patients and motivated them to complete their recovery treatment so that they could succeed in changing their lives and integrating back to their families. The day ended with the cutting of the anniversary cake followed by a lunch.

11. Awareness Program with the Tibetan Youth Congress on the 26th of June, 2022.

An awareness program was organised by the Kalimpong District Tibetan Youth Congress on substance abuse and its social ills in collaboration with H.A.N.D.S. staff for the youth of the Tibetan community in Kalimpong District. The participating youth were concerned about the ever-growing substance use amongst them and were keen on taking a pro-active precautionary measure.

12. Legal Awareness Camp at Kalimpong District Correctional Home on the 22nd of July, 2022.

H.A.N.D.S. in collaboration with the District Legal Services Authority, Government of West Bengal has been a part of therapeutic and counselling classes organised exclusively for the inmates of Kalimpong District Correctional Home since 2021. One of the first classes was taken last year on the 6th of August, 2021 under the guidance of H.A.N.D.S. Coordinator Mr. Nereus Mukhia. This year, the awareness program was held on the 22nd of July 2022, addressing over 120 inmates. Along with an eye-opening session on substance abuse and its dependency prone character, a mental therapy was also conducted by H.A.N.D.S. staff Mr. Prayogti Kumai and Mr. Amar Tamang. The inmates were highly engaging, participative, and eager to learn and listen.

13. Project 'SHUDDHI' Review on the 2nd of August, 2022.

Taking first-hand review of the patients admitted under project 'SHUDDHI' at the H.A.N.D.S. Rehabilitation Center, the Superintendent of Kalimpong District Police, Madam Aparajita Rai interacted with each and every individual in-house patient, talking to them, taking note of their mental and physical health and monitoring their progress. As mentioned earlier, the 'SHUDDHI' project is a flagship program initiated by Madam Aparajita Rai, under Kalimpong District Police, partnering with H.A.N.D.S.

14. Independence Day Celebration on the 15th of August, 2022.

Independence Day celebration is one of the most awaited celebrations of the year 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 Center look 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. Like any other year, H.A.N.D.S. staffs, volunteers and the in-house patients celebrated the Independence Day at the Center. The day started as usual with marchpast, which the in-house patients practiced 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 tombola.

15. Awareness Program at Dr Grahams Homes School on the 19th of August, 2022.

H.A.N.D.S. and Kalimpong District Police conducted another awareness program for the students of Dr. Grahams Homes School, Kalimpong. The Superintendent of Police, Madam, Aparajita Rai along with Sub-Inspector, Madam ShovnaSewa gave out power point presentation on vulnerabilities of the youth addiction and abuse. The program was well received by the students. H.A.N.D.S. Coordinator Mr. Nereus Mukhia addressed the students and took questions.

16. Awareness Program at Chandra Lok Samaj, Kalimpong 4th of September, 2022.

ChandralokJanjagrityPariyar, a renowned Community (Samaj) of Chandralok, Durpin, 35 No.Samasti, Kalimpong organization an awareness program on substance addiction and abuseto address the growing problem in their community, especially amongst the youth. The Superintendent of Police, Madam, Aparajita Rai along with Sub-Inspector,Madam ShovnaSewa participated as resource people about substance abuse and addiction. The awareness program was attended by over 500 community (samaj) members.

17. Diwali Celebration in October 2023

To make the in-house patients belonging to different religiousbackgroundsfeel at home and learn to celebrate festivals happily without the use of substance and Alcohol,

H.A.N.D.S. staff, volunteers and in-house patients celebrated Diwali – the festival of lights in the Rehabilitation Center by decorating the Center, lighting lamps, singing songs (as per Nepali tradition and culture) and playing games.

18. World Aids Day Celebration of the 1st of December, 2022.

H.A.N.D.S. celebrated World Aids Day by reaching out to the masses on the streets of Kalimpong town for the entire day on a one-to-one basis in an endeavor to break the chain of stigmatization against HIV/AIDS and create awareness about HIV/AIDS spread associated with substance abuse and addiction.

19. Christmas Celebrations on 25th Dec 2022

HANDS has always celebrated Christmas with members of Christian Motorcycles Association (CMA) who visit the rehabilitation center on the 25th of December morning and spend the day with the patients. The young members of CMA come early at 8 am to share the significance of Christ and 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. The CMA members bring with them cakes and other food items for the patients. They conduct pray them, read Gospel parts and gave the patients a fun day. The purpose of such visits is to motivate the patients into believing that there is a life, fun and happiness without drug use.

20. CSR Aid for Project ‘SHUDDHI’ on the 28th of December, 2022.

The ‘SHUDDHI’ project or initiative (launched by Kalimpong District Police in collaboration with H.A.N.D.S.) was able to secure Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) aid from Super Shakti Foundation, an organisation from Kolkata, whose representatives visited Kalimpong town on the 28th of December, 2022 and donated a sum of Rupees Eight Lakhs (Rs. 800,000) to H.A.N.D.S. The CSR funding would not have been possible without the involvement of Kalimpong District Police, particularly the Kalimpong District SP, Madam, Aparajits Rai, whose continued effort in combating substance abuse resulted in securing financial resources to help the victims. So far, the CSR financial donation received so far has been utilized to provide free treatment (for six and a half months) to over twenty-five needy, marginalized local substance abuse victims at H.A.N.D.S.’s Rehabilitation Center under project ‘SHUDDHI’.

21. Gorubathan Awareness Program 3rd Feb 2023

An awareness program on substance was organized by the Kalimpong District Police with H.A.N.D.S. for the first time in Block 2 of Kalimpong District, Gorubathan keeping in mind the ever-growing problem in the community, especially the youth. The SP Kalimpong, Madam, Aparajita Rai and SI, Madam Shovna Sewa and H.A.N.D.S.

Coordinator, Mr. Nereus Mukhia participated as resource people talking on substance to over 200 people who attended the program.

22. Various Family Classes and Counselling

H.A.N.D.S. 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, H.A.N.D.S. 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 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 H.A.N.D.S. Day Care Center.

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

Another key H.A.N.D.S. 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.

In addition to these, HANDS has continued its operation at its two centers – the rehabilitation and the day care. The following are the numbers for the year 2022-2023.

THE FIGURES AS PRE THE PERFORMANCE CHART AND REGISTERS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. Rehabilitation Center

Total patients treated in the rehabilitation Center: 92

Chemically dependent: 62

Alcoholics: 24

Poly (Both): 06

Total no of patients succeeded after discharge: 61

Out of which its categorized as (Chemically dependent: 42, Alcoholics: 19, Poly:1)

The annual success rate of the rehabilitation Center in percentage is: 57.04%

2. Day Care / Drop in Center

Total patients treated in the Day Care Center: 213

(Regular)Chemically Dependent: 140

(Regular)Alcoholics: 41

(Regular)Poly (Both): 32

3. Family Classes in Day Care Center

Total No of family classes conducted on a weekly basis: 51

Total No of family members attending classes: 1035

Overall, H.A.N.D.S. performance has been steady and improving by the way. Our success rate has been boosted bywhich is remarkable for a small organization like ours. We can look back with a lot of satisfaction as we were able to bring back more than of our patients back to mainstream society. That they become responsible members of our community, well integrated back and living drug or alcohol free is H.A.N.D.S. ultimate objective, which we at H.A.N.D.S. strive for every single day. A big thank you to all the staff and volunteers including the Board of Members of H.A.N.D.S.