



Notes on Activities - I

2023-2024

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

Annual Report 2023-2024

The year 2023-2024 was another remarkable year for Himalayan Anti Aids & Anti Narcotic Drugs Society (H.A.N.D.S.), Kalimpong in its endeavor and determination towards combating the ills of substance addiction and abuse in Kalimpong District. H.A.N.D.S. conducted several chemical substance and alcohol addiction/abuse related awareness programs across Kalimpong District -- this year, mostly in collaboration with and/or support from the Kalimpong District Police. The keen involvement of Kalimpong District Police in fighting against substance abuse and addiction issues within Kalimpong district greatly supported and strengthened H.A.N.D.S.'s endeavors and work. It has facilitated H.A.N.D.S. to carry forward its work with better efficiency and to greater masses. In addition to the standard general activities conducted annually, many new activities were undertaken by H.A.N.D.S., particularly in collaboration with Kalimpong District Police and other organisations as well.

A special, heartfelt vote of acknowledgement to the former Superintendent of Police (SP), Kalimpong, Madam Aparajita Rai for leading many of the key initiatives under 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. Madam Aparajita Rai was recently transferred from Kalimpong District but H.A.N.D.S. shall always remember Madam Aparajita's dedicated involvement in fighting against substance addiction and abuse that plague our community in Kalimpong. 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 as well as the SI, Madam Shovna Sewa. H.A.N.D.S. also acknowledges the keen involvement of the new Superintendent of Police, Shir. Shirhari Panday, IPS who has already graced many of our events and initiatives.

In 2023-2024, H.A.N.D.S. became the CSR beneficiary of Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) Assam and Indian Oil Corporation, receiving transportation vehicle to carry in-house patients to hospitals and space for Day Care Center for day counselling session respectively. This was possible only because of the hard work that went in liaisoning, networking and communicating with numerous individuals and organisations. Under H.A.N.D.S. keen involvement, a new permanent skateboarding park for youth was inaugurated in Kalimpong Town by Kalimpong District Police.

We have briefly outlined all the activities that H.A.N.D.S. undertook in the year 2023-2024, individually and mostly 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. Inauguration of SHUDDHI Fitness Park on 1st April 2023 at Rangpu.

Safe-guarding the masses, particularly the local youth from going astray into drug and alcohol addiction and abuse, H.A.N.D.S. along with Kalimpong District Police and a not-for-profit organisation -- Super Shakti Foundation, constructed and inaugurated an open gym at Rangpu, Kalimpong District. The objective of this open gym was to provide provisions and motivate the locals, especially the youth to focus and be active in improving and maintaining their physical health. This initiative was a part of the SHUDDHI Project – a flagship program of Kalimpong District Police that focuses and directly engages with the local youth of the district in combating against drug/alcohol abuse/addiction and trafficking. The gym, located along the West Bengal - Sikkim border is accessible to the locals of Sikkim as well living near the vicinity of the gym.

2. Awareness Program at Kalimpong Correctional Home on 3rd April, 2023.

H.A.N.D.S. in collaboration with the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Government of West Bengal has been providing therapeutic and counselling classes (once a month) as well as awareness programs exclusively for the inmates of Kalimpong District Correctional Home since 2021. Under this initiative H.A.N.D.S. staff members (a three-member team) take monthly classes (sometimes once every two months) at the correctional center in order to provide effective measures to aid the inmates in their transformation journey by making them conscious of their strengths, shortcomings and giving them hope as they prepare to join the mainstream society as reformed citizens. Additionally, H.A.N.D.S. also conduct the awareness programs whenever it is scheduled by the DLSA.

3. Rehabilitation Centre Annual Picnic on the 11th April, 2023.

In order to facilitate the recovery of the in-house patients undergoing treatment at H.A.N.D.S.'s Rehabilitation Center at Chibo Busty, Kalimpong, all the in-house patients were taken for a day picnic along the banks of River Teesta (a popular picnic spot). Such an outing in natural environment helps the in-house patients refresh, reorient and have fun, thereby motivating them to focus better on their ongoing treatment. The Superintendent of Police and Additional Superintendent of Police of Kalimpong District Police, Madam Aparajita Rai, IPS and Madam Subhanwita, IPS joined the picnic for few hours which greatly supported and motivated the patients.

4. Awareness Program at Jaldhaka, Kalimpong on the 31st May, 2023.

As the rural areas of Kalimpong District too has burning issues of substance abuse and alcoholism with vulnerable children/ youth falling prey to it rapidly, Kalimpong District Police along with H.A.N.D.S. held an awareness program at Jaldhaka to make the community people aware of the diseases, its identifications and remedies.

5. Awareness Program at Kalimpong Correctional Home on 7th June, 2023.

As a part of H.A.N.D.S.'s therapeutic and counselling classes as well as awareness programs conducted in collaboration with the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Government of West Bengal exclusively for the inmates of Kalimpong District Correctional Home, an awareness creation session was held at the Kalimpong correctional home to motivate the inmates in becoming good citizens.

6. Health Check-up for Shuddhi Patients at the Rehabilitation Center on 9th June 2023.

Sponsored by the Rotary Club of Siliguri, and initiated by Kalimpong District Police, a health camp to provide blood check-up was conducted for the SHUDDHI Project patients of H.A.N.D.S. at the Rehabilitation Center. The objective of this camp was to monitor and check the in-house patient's blood because majority of them have poor physical health because of years of substance abuse even before they join the Rehabilitation Center.

7. KaNGON meeting hosted by H.A.N.D.S. Rehabilitation Center on 14th June, 2023.

H.A.N.D.S. hosted a meeting for Kalimpong NGO Network (KaNGON) -- an umbrella organisation of many registered NGO's of Kalimpong District at its Rehabilitation Centre. H.A.N.D.S. collaborates with all member organizations of KaNGON to better address different types of other societal issues that people of Kalimpong face and suffer from including addiction.

8. International Day Against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking on 26th June, 2023.

This year, the International Day Against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking was celebrated at H.A.N.D.S.'s Rehabilitation Centre at Chibo Busty in presence of the SP of Kalimpong District, Madam Aparajita Rai, IPS and the board members of H.A.N.D.S. On this occasion the in-house patients performed various recovery related songs and dances. The celebration was also attended by Ex-SHUDDHI patients, who gave their personal testimonies, that sent positive message and impact to the in-house patients and their families.

9. Awareness Program at Kalimpong Correctional Home on 4th July, 2023.

Another therapeutic and counselling class was taking by H.A.N.D.S. members at the correctional home -- each session was held with great zeal as all these series of sessions were delivered under various topics related to recovery and a life free of drugs and alcohol. As the inmates identify with all the signs, symptoms and problems of substance abuse, these sessions are taken seriously.

10.Independence Day Celebration on 15thAugust, 2023.

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. The patients in the Rehabilitation Centre too look forward to celebrating this day. Like any other year, H.A.N.D.S.'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.

11.Kalimpong Town Clean up Drive on 25thAugust, 2023.

H.A.N.D.S. members in collaboration with the Government Departments like Kalimpong Municipality, Kalimpong District Police, Indian Army from station headquarters Kalimpong, The Fire Department, several NGO's and social activists including KaNGON organised a mass clean up drive of Kalimpong Town. All participants participated by cleaning/ clearing clogged drains, collecting garbage and washing the town clean there by also passing on a conscious message to the masses of Kalimpong to keep Kalimpong Clean.

12.Inauguration of Indian Oil Sponsored Day Care Center on 28thAugust, 2023.

Under the initiative of Kalimpong District Police, in particular the SP, Madam Aparajita Rai, IPS, H.A.N.D.S. was granted space for a Day Care/ Counseling Centre in a building of the District Police Control room, located in the heart of the town. The old Day Care/Counselling Center was very small, and accommodating growing number of recovering patients and their families for weekly classes/counselling sessions was becoming very difficult. Acknowledging this problem, Madam Aparajita Rai provided the space, which was converted into a full furnished Counseling/ Day Care Center under the CSR sponsorship by Indian Oil Corporation, West Bengal State Office.

13.Felicitation program of Shuddhi Patients on 29thAugust,2023.

Felicitating SHUDDHI patient's completion of a full year in recovery. H.A.N.D.S. believes in celebrating such small milestones which keeps motivating the recovering patients.

14.Community Awareness Program on 10thSeptember, 2023.

A not-for-profit organisation, Makhamali Welfare Society, located at 10th Mile, Gumbha Hatta, Kalimpong had organized a mass awareness program for its community members at Marwari Palace, 10th Mile, Kalimpong. H.A.N.D.S. participated in the program to facilitate making people conscious and aware about substance/alcohol addiction and abuse. Various other issues like human trafficking, cyber-crime, etc., too were discussed, especially by Judge Mrs. Tashi T. Sherpa of District Legal Services Authority and the Officers of Kalimpong Police Department respectively.

15. Plastic Bann Awareness Drive on 28th September, 2023.

H.A.N.D.S. as part of Kalimpong NGO Network (KaNGON) along with Kalimpong Municipality and District Enforcement Branch of Kalimpong District Police conducted a community drive against the usage of plastic in Kalimpong town. As the usage of Single Use Plastic (SUP) has been banned by the Government of India because of its harmful effects on the environment, Kalimpong too has been plagued with the harms of plastic and the combined effort to stop SUP's became a serious need. The entire Business community of Kalimpong was requested to refrain usage of SUP

16. Blood Donation Camp on 3rd October, 2023.

H.A.N.D.S. staff and volunteer members, regularly participate in blood donations camps organized by various communities and organizations including the district hospital. This was one such blood donation camps organized by a local samaj -- East Main Road Gram Kalyan Samiti.

17. Swasta Bhawan Officials Visit on 16th October, 2023.

H.A.N.D.S. being the only organization to be a part of the SHUDDHI project from North Bengal region, the Mental Health Officials from Swasta Bhawan, Department of Health, Government of West Bengal, Kolkata visited Rehabilitation Centre and the newly inaugurated Day Care Centre of H.A.N.D.S. With everything in order, including the infrastructure to documents, the inspection team awarded H.A.N.D.S. with Clinical Certification – a necessary document for implementing SHUDDHI project in Kalimpong District.

18. Inauguration of Shuddhi Skate Board Park on 23rd October, 2023.

“Attraction rather than promotion” being the theme behind the skateboarding park, Kalimpong District Police under personal initiative from the Superintendent of Police, Madam Aparajita Rai, IPS, constructed a SHUDDHIs skate board park in collaboration with H.A.N.D.S. in Kalimpong town to safe guard the vulnerable youth from the menace and life style of substance abuse and motivate them to channelize their energy and interest to youth trending sports like skateboarding. H.A.N.D.S. coordinator Mr. Nereus Mukhia played a key role is helping Kalimpong District Police acquire No Objection Certificate from the Property Manager of Diocese of Eastern Himalaya Darjeeling. Last year, 24th of April, 2022, H.A.N.D.S. had organised Skateboarding Competition in collaboration with local youth organisations, K-Town SK8DOWN and Kalimpong District Police. Tapping on the enthusiasm of the youth and teenagers on this sports, H.A.N.D.S. partnered with Kalimpong District Police in providing these youth with a permanent skateboarding park. This skateboarding park was the result of the keen involvement of Kalimpong District Police and H.A.N.D.S. via Project SHUDDHI.

19. Diwali Celebrations on 17th November, 2023.

H.A.N.D.S. take keen interest to celebrate our cultural, social and religious festivals since the in-house patients belong to different backgrounds. In order to make the in-house patients feel at

home and not miss out on celebrating festive events, every year Diwali is celebrated with great joy and enthusiasm. The festival was celebrated by decorating the Center, lighting lamps, singing songs (as per Nepali tradition and culture) and playing games.

20. World AIDS Day on 1st December, 2023.

H.A.N.D.S. celebrated International World AIDS Day by organizing an awareness program at Rockvale Academy – a local private school in Kalimpong. The message of HIV/AIDS and its mode of transmission, its myths and facts were delivered to the students, which was received with great interest. One of the objectives of the awareness program conducted in a school was to break the chain of stigmatization against HIV/AIDS and create awareness about HIV/AIDS spread associated with substance abuse and addiction. The program was concluded answering several questions raised the students.

21. Christmas Celebrations on 25th December, 2023.

HANDS has always celebrated Christmas with members of Christian Motorcycles Association (CMA) who visit the rehabilitation center on the 25th 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. H.A.N.D.S. 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.

22. Monthly Mental Health Verification at Kalimpong Correctional Home

A three-member team of the District Mental Health Assessment, H.A.N.D.S.'s Coordinator Mr. Nereus Mukhia, Judge of District Legal Services Authority and a clinical Psychologist from Kalimpong District Hospital visited the correctional home of Kalimpong District every first Monday of the Month. During these visits all the inmates and under-trials go through a one-on-one sessions with the representatives to assess and council on mental and physical health which would further facilitate every individuals correctional transition.

23. Project Shuddhi Music Video Released on 23rd January, 2024.

Kalimpong District Police under project SHUDDI Project launched a music video on substance abuse and recovery in collaboration with H.A.N.D.S. SHUDDHI Project recovering patient, Mr. Henry Rai composed and sang a rap song narrating his journey of substance abuse and recovery in order to share hope and give strength to youth still in the recovery process.

The link to the song can be found here <https://youtu.be/KWzh9janz1o?feature=shared>

24. Patient Transportation Vehicle Donation on 24th January, 2024.

As the in-house patients of the Rehabilitation Center need regular medical checkups for both mental and physical health, they have to be taken to hospitals and Doctor chambers to as far as Siliguri – that takes more than 3 hours from the Center. Hence to cater to this need, H.A.N.D.S. board member Mr. Ashok Kr Pradhan approached the CSR department of Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) Assam. Mr Sudip Pradhan, CSR head of Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) donated a Van (Maruti Suzuki Ecco) to H.A.N.D.S.

25. Inauguration of SHUDDHI Gym at Barbot-Parbringtar on 22nd February, 2024.

With the slogan, “say yes to fitness, say no to drugs” Kalimpong District Police under the project SHUDDHI created and inaugurated a second gym for the youth in association with H.A.N.D.S. This gym is located in the rural area of Barbot, Parbringtar, Kalimpong District. Shri. Shrihari Pandey IPS, the new Superintendent of Police, Kalimpong District Police inaugurated a much needed multi gym in the presence of Additional SP, Mrs. Subhanwita IPS, and H.A.N.D.S members. The objective of the gym is to motivate the youth towards improving physical and mental health, and staying away from substance and alcohol addiction and abuse.

26. Felicitation of SHUDDHI Patients on 16th March, 2024.

In collaboration with Kalimpong District Police since 30th April 2022 till date total 100 such candidates have provided de-addiction rehabilitation treatment free-of-cost, out of which 72 are leading a clean life. A celebration of 365 days in joyful recovery -- a felicitation program of 09 (nine) Shuddhi patients was organized at the Rehabilitation Centre for completing 1st year in sobriety. Getting felicitated by Shri Shrihari Pandey IPS, SP Kalimpong and Additional SP, Madam Subhanwitawas a great honor and motivation for the patients to further take their recovery to greater heights.

27. Weekly Family Visits for counselling at H.A.N.D.S. Day Care Center, Kalimpong.

As a part of H.A.N.D.S.’s Rehabilitation Treatment Program, family members of in-house patients have to mandatorily attend weekly day counselling at the Day Center to learn how to deal, facilitate and support speedy, sustainable recovery of their loved ones. H.A.N.D.S. believes that family counselling via 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.

28.Monthly family visits at H.A.N.D.S. Rehabilitation Center at Chibu Busty.

Once every month (first Thursday of the month) family members of in-house patients are allowed a visit at the Rehabilitation Center to meet their loved ones. This visit starts at 9 am in the morning and end at 12 pm.

29. Weekly morning walks.

In order to promote physical fitness, one a week, the in-house patients are taken for morning walk outside of the Rehabilitation Center. The walks are monitored by H.A.N.D.S.'s staff members. The remaining days of the week, the in-house patients walk and exercise inside the Rehabilitation Center.

30. Recreation Activities.

In-house patients, after the day classes and sessions are over are encouraged to spend time in groups playing games and interacting with each other. There are chess, board games, carom and musical instruments that can be availed.

31. Celebration of sober birthdays.

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 Center and the Day Care Center. Overall, H.A.N.D.S.performance has been steady and improving by the way. The following are the numbers for the year 2023-2024.

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.

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

1. Rehabilitation Center

Patients treated in the rehabilitation Center: 162

Chemically dependent: 66

Alcoholics: 77

Poly (Both): 19

Total no of patients succeeded after discharge: 114

Out of which its categorized as (Chemically dependent: 50, Alcoholics: 57, Poly: 7)

The annual success rate of the rehabilitation Center in percentage is – 70.3%

2. Day Care / Drop in Center

Patients treated in the Day Care Center: (out of which- individuals on a regular basis)

(Regular)Chemically Dependent: 440

(Regular)Alcoholics: 210

(Regular)Poly (Both): 120

3. Family Classes in Day Care Center

Total No of family classes conducted on a weekly basis: 52

Total No of family members attending classes: 1621

4. SHUDDHI Project Patients

Total number of patients enrolled: 53

Total number of patients released: 47