



OPHID Press Statement on World AIDS Day 2015

Strengthening linkages to HIV services, essential to achieving national targets

On 1 December, 2015, The Organisation for Public Health Interventions and Development (OPHID) joins the world in commemorating World AIDS Day.

As a key partner in supporting provision of quality HIV Testing, Care and Treatment services in Zimbabwe, OPHID is committed to supporting national efforts to achieve the Global Treatment targets of getting:

- 90% of PLHIV knowing their HIV status;
- 90% of people diagnosed with HIV infection and receiving sustained antiretroviral therapy;
- 90% of people receiving antiretroviral therapy virally suppressed

As Zimbabwe continues to build on the gains in the coverage and uptake of HIV testing, care and treatment services, OPHID believes that strengthening linkages between services is a key strategy to achieve the set targets.

‘To attain the 90,90,90 vision, key focus should be on ensuring that people living with HIV are identified, linked to – and stay in – care and treatment’, says Patricia Mbetu, Chief of Party of the OPHID-led FACE Pediatric HIV Care and Treatment Consortium.

‘Actively linking persons living with HIV (PLHIV) to services is critical for their own health, as well as to prevent HIV transmission to uninfected partner(s) and children’, Ms Mbetu adds.

OPHID’s focus on linkages to care for PLHIV

OPHID is concerned about the many HIV-infected persons, who remain undiagnosed, and those that do not enrol in HIV clinical care after diagnosis. With financial support from PEPFAR, through USAID, the FACE Pediatric HIV Care and Treatment Consortium partners (OPHID, KAPNEK and ZAPP Trust) are:

- Working with the Ministry of Health and Child Care to understand and close gaps in reaching HIV positive individuals with testing services.
- Strengthening referral systems at health facilities to connect those testing positive to treatment and care.
- Strengthening linkages between health facilities and communities for follow up of defaulting clients and bringing them back to care.

On this World AIDS Day, OPHID reiterates its commitment to ensure that all people living with HIV are identified and linked to care as soon as possible and are retained in the continuum of care, to allow them to gain the full benefits of early treatment.

For more information about the FACE Pediatric HIV Care and Treatment Program contact

Patricia Mbetu, Chief of Party. Email: pmbetu@ophid.co.zw; Telephone: 04-252772/700607

Loveness Mlambo-Chimombe, Policy Advocacy and Communications Manager. Email: lmambo@ophid.co.zw

Tel: 04- 706607. Website: www.ophid.co.zw Facebook: www.facebook.com/OPHID