

For Immediate Release

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Real Medicine Foundation and Jeevan Jyoti Health Service Society HIV/AIDS Initiative Inaugurate Integrated Counseling and Testing Center (ICTC) and Link ART Center in Jhabua, Madhya Pradesh

A milestone for both Madhya Pradesh States AIDS Control Society's and the people living with HIV/AIDS in Jhabua



Meghnagar, Jhabua - July 25, 2009 - Together with the members of the Jhabua Positive Network, staff of Jeevan Jyoti Hospital, friends and supporters from Delhi, and Dr. Fabian Toegel and Caitlin McQuilling from Real Medicine Foundation, Bishop Devprasad Ganawa, Bishop of the Jhabua Diocese, cut the ribbon to inaugurate the new ICTC and Link ART centers on the campus of Jeevan Jyoti Hospital in Meghnagar, Jhabua.

This event marks a milestone in Madhya Pradesh's efforts to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS and to provide care and treatment for those affected by embracing public private partnerships (PPPs) to spread the reach of HIV/AIDS testing, counseling, and treatment services.

The new link ART center is the first PPP link ART center in MP and one of only 4 link ART centers in the state. The ICTC center is just the 2nd Public Private Partnership (PPP) ICTC Center in the Madhya Pradesh.

This is a huge step forward for the people of Jhabua, increasing the accessibility of counseling and testing facilities and making life saving ART medication available to HIV positive patients locally.

Currently all 54 HIV positive people currently receiving antiretroviral treatment (ART) in Jhabua, must travel 5 hours to Indore each month to receive their ART medications. While JJHSS and RMF currently provide transportation for all PLHAs to Indore, this is still a huge financial and emotional burden for these individuals and their families each month.

Patients currently on ART will now be able to collect their medications from the link ART Center in Meghnagar each month. They will only have to visit the ART Center in Indore once every 6 months when they require their bi-yearly laboratory tests and medical check-up.

JJHHS, with support from Real Medicine Foundation, has already established and supports the Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS in Jhabua and conducts various community level counseling and testing drives. Led by Jimmy Nirmal and Fr. Sylvester, their efforts include outreach to rural migrants, local jails, and at risk communities. They also provide awareness and sensitization trainings for local schools, NGOs, and government workers. There are currently 150 HIV positive people benefiting from these services.

JJHHS and RMF are currently applying for a Community Care Center so that Jeevan Jyoti Hospital will be able to provide the full range of services to people living with HIV/AIDS and the broader community in Jhabua.