

# **WELCOME ADDRESS AT NAPWA WORKSHOP**

## **CULTURAL CENTRE**

**07 NOVEMBER 2012**

Programme Director

Today we have gathered here from all walks of life to attend this workshop as South Africans being ready to take the bull by its horns. We are here to learn more on how to confront the scourge of HIV and AIDS through prevention and HIV testing promotion.

We are aware that this year marked the 31<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the discovery of the HIV, the virus that has plagued the entire world since it was discovered.

During this notable year, the global community and the United Nations convened a High Level meeting where the international community reaffirmed its determination to do everything humanly possible to significantly mitigate the impact of the pandemic.

This determination included to the critical need to reduce the number of new infections and, most importantly, to invest resources in the efforts of the scientific community to develop a vaccine or any other novel technologies to control and arrest the spread of HIV.

I therefore would like to acknowledge the presence of everyone present here today including District and Local structures. Government works closely with other stakeholders in order to identify issues that require attention in the short, medium and long term.

As we are gathered here today, we need education for HIV-positive people and for the broader community about the rights of people with HIV and AIDS, and all HIV-related education must acknowledge diversity and be accessible.

Positive people must be supported to live as full participants in community life. There needs to be attention paid to the housing needs of positive people, to income support, to access to technology and community services.

The ability to criticise government is a key characteristics of a healthy society, and our representative organisations are a critical part of this.

Health and health care is, of course, central to social justice for people with HIV and AIDS. Access to treatments and care, securing current levels of services, continued consumer participation and equitable access to medical assistance are critical.

Stigma and discrimination continue to be significant problems. Labelling by society and ourselves, discrimination and other barriers to full participation society must all be addressed.

Rights without enforcement are close to meaningless. The diversity of the HIV community requires acknowledgement and appropriate response. This is an issue both for service providers. Services must be accessible for all people with HIV and AIDS. HIV and AIDS advocacy demand collaboration with all affected groups.

Programme Director,

With these few words, I wish to welcome everyone present here. At all times, preventing HIV from spreading is a vital way of helping South Africans at high risk to arrest the threads of AIDS.

So please support those with HIV, talk about the virus with your children, your partner, friends and colleagues.

**I THANK YOU!**

**KE A LEBOGA!**