

PRESS RELEASE

Cooperation between major corporations could reap benefits in the fight against HIV/Aids

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Pooling of financial resources by major corporations could lead to the creation of more effective HIV/Aids programmes that can have a regional, and even national, impact on HIV/Aids in South Africa, says Rodney Cowlin of Aid for AIDS.

Cowlin, Director of Aid for AIDS the leading developer and administrator of HIV/Aids programmes for corporate South Africa, says that most major South African companies have acknowledged the importance of having in-house HIV/Aids education and treatment programmes available to employees.

“Although this commitment to the provision of HIV/Aids programmes is to be welcomed and acknowledged, in many cases these programmes - concentrating as they do on a small universe such as employees within a company- do not extend into communities or even benefit the families of employees. Their positive impact is therefore limited

“We believe that as companies operating in a common geographical area are dependent on the local labour pool for their future productivity and growth, it would be to the benefit of all if consideration is given to developing cooperative ventures in this crucial area.

“By amalgamating corporate funding, companies will be able to launch stronger, more focused programmes which offer increased benefits by escalating awareness about the HIV/Aids pandemic in communities and offering better access to counselling and even anti-retroviral treatments,” Cowlin said.

In addition to these benefits, by making use of specialists in the development of HIV/Aids programmes, the companies concerned will have access to the skills required to ensure that programmes were tailor-made to meet the requirements of the workforces and community being targeted.

There are several examples of successful cooperative HIV/Aids ventures in South Africa. In the Eastern Cape, Aid for AIDS was involved in the East London area with two major companies wanting to make an impression on HIV/Aids which was having an impact on communities in the area- and ultimately reducing the pool the companies could use as a source for future workers.

Aid for AIDS was able to construct a programme for them and they have been able to introduce an effective programme that is running in smaller centres around East London.

“The benefits that will be experienced through a joint commitment to fighting HIV/Aids will undoubtedly be more significant than those that could have been achieved through individual, isolated efforts,” Cowlin concluded.

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399 Words

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