

SHBC client death rate drops to 11%

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15 January, 2013 11:24:00

SHISELWENI Reformed Home-Based Care (SHBC) Chief Executive Officer Dr Arnau van Wyngaard says the organisation has achieved a drop in the death rate of its clients.

He said the death rate, which was now at 11.7%, stood at 35.3% when the organisation started in 2006 and dropped to 21.1% in 2009. He said about 621 of their clients died in 2008 while only 334 died last year. explained

Dr van Wyngaard explained that about 14 473 people had been referred for HIV counselling and testing since 2008 while 9 087 were referred for anti-retroviral treatment (ART) and 12 106 for tuberculosis (TB) testing.

“Breaking through the challenges of denial and stigmatisation, the SBHC caregivers convinced community members to visit their closest VCT facility in order to be tested to determine their HIV status.

“If they were positive, the caregivers would encourage them to start ART and through initial daily visits, the caregivers reminded them to take their medication as prescribed. Through the intervention of the SBHC caregivers, family members and friends of those who were enrolled on ART started giving them adherence support,” Dr van Wyngaard said.

accommodate

SHBC started operating in 2006, working with 32 volunteers. The organisation trained caregivers and started working at Dwaleni and has now expanded to accommodate 33 communities in Shiselweni up to Lavumisa.

The organisation now has 872 volunteers, each of whom has been trained in the basics of palliative care. They pay visits to about 3 000 clients, helping them with basic needs such as cleaning the house, feeding the sick, fetching water and firewood, etc.

The organisation is also engaged in early childhood development and started a pre-school in 2006 which now has about 30 children enrolled. In 2011, MTN Swaziland agreed to sponsor the pre-school and new classrooms were built as well as two more teachers engaged.

2

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