

WORLD AIDS DAY

Govt hospitals in UP report fewer new cases of HIV

Awareness, Better Blood Banking Help

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Lucknow: New cases of HIV infection reported in government hospitals of Uttar Pradesh show a declining trend. In a gap of just two years, the rate of new HIV infection has reduced by nearly 30-35 % in some of the centres of the state.

Statistics of Uttar Pradesh State AIDS Control Society show that in 2012 and till January 2013, about 656 new cases of HIV were registered for anti-retroviral therapy at the King George's Medical University while the figure stood at 1,444 in 2010. Likewise, 1,818 new persons were put on antiretroviral therapy in 2012 and till January 2013 at IMS Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi. Not in keeping with this falling trend, however, 3,162 new cases were reported in 2010 for ART at IMS BHU. But, other government centres of the state witnessed a significant fall in new cases of HIV infection.

Not only UP, the similar trend has also been witnessed in the country. The recently released UNAIDS Report 2013 stated that India has managed to reduce new HIV infections by 57% between 2001 and 2012.

Health experts attributed increased public awareness as one of the main reasons behind the fall in number of new HIV cases being reported. "Due to various educational programmes, people have become more aware about HIV/AIDS. More and more patients in both government and private hospitals insist on use of new needle for injection," said A K Tripathi, head of department of clinical haematology.

The other reason is improvement in blood bank services as blood is now checked thoroughly before transfusion. "The ban on sale of blood has helped a lot," said Dr Tripathi. Another major cause is the widespread availability of ART which suppressed the HIV virus and stops the progression of HIV disease. Earlier, ART was available at only a few hospitals of the state but now UP has 22 centres and many district hospitals are linked to centres where HIV persons can get the medicines.

"Due to ART, the situation has now become better than earlier. There has been decline in rate of new HIV infections and it will reduce more in the coming days," said Preetam Kaur, president of Lucknow Positive Women Welfare Society. Kaur added, "We have come even closer to ensuring that children born to mothers with HIV are delivered without contracting the disease. If apregnant woman with HIV is getting treatment and delivery at a government hospital, children born to them are negative."

Signature campaign for AIDS awareness On the eve of Aids day, Red Ribbon Club of Lucknow launched a signature campaign to create awareness among the people about aids. The students of the university put red ribbon on teachers, students, employees and other people entering the university and requested them to inform everyone about the subject.

POSITIVE TREND			
Anti Retroviral Treatment Registered in HIV Care (New Cases)			
Name of ART Centre	Till January, 2013	2011	2010
IMS BHU Varanasi	1,818	2,794	3,162
CSMMU Lucknow	656	1,330	1,444
M.L.N Allahabad	1,230	1,226	1,412
BRD, Gorakhpur	1,610	2,010	2,733
JLN.MC Aligarh	420	458	479

(Source: UPSACS)

