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TAC Electronic Newsletter

16 May 2008

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UPDATES

- [ALP/SASFU court case](#) on discrimination against people living with HIV by the South African National Defence Force continues today in the Pretoria High Court.
- [Yanga Janet](#) was arrested yesterday afternoon in Khayelitsha. TAC will ensure that bail is opposed. TAC also has a temporary interdict against him. The return date for the hearing for the final interdict has been set for 22 May 2008.
- [Songs from Jikelele](#), the 2003 album of TAC's choir, the *Generics*, have been put onto the TAC website for free download.
- [TAC is advertising](#) for a new Director of its Policy, Communications and Research Unit.

TAC makes submission on new HIV Guidelines

TAC has made a submission to the Department of Health (DoH) and the South African National AIDS Council (SANAC) on the new draft DoH Guidelines on the Management of HIV in Health Facilities (Guidelines). The submission was presented yesterday (16 May) by Zackie Achmat at a meeting of SANAC's Technical Task Team on HIV Treatment, Care and Support. Later this month the submission will also be presented at the SANAC Plenary.

TAC welcomes the release of the Guidelines and we are pleased with a number of positive features which will lead to further improvements in the standard and quality of care for people with HIV. Nevertheless, we have a number of concerns which we have asked the Department of Health to address before the document is finalised. Our key recommendations are:

- ? The CD4 count threshold for Highly Active Antiretroviral Treatment (HAART) treatment initiation should be progressively raised from 250 to 350 cells/mm³ over the next three years and immediately in facilities which have the capacity to do this and for pregnant women.
- ? The time period between treatment assessment and treatment commencement is too long and should be kept to an absolute minimum. Patients with critically low CD4 counts or who are diagnosed with advanced AIDS illnesses must

be initiated onto HAART immediately, unless contraindicated.

? Pap smears, recommended by the Guidelines for HIV-positive women at the time of treatment commencement, should be offered sooner.

? The paediatric treatment protocol must be revised to recommend immediate HAART initiation for all infants who are diagnosed with HIV.

Downloads:

* [Department of Health Guidelines on the Management of HIV in Health Facilities](#)

* [TAC Submission on the Guidelines](#)

[END OF NEWSLETTER]

- [TAC News](#)

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