

Tshwane District Hospital

Community challenges and purpose of centre

Community-oriented Substance Use Programme (COSUP) is a group effort between the Gauteng Government, Department of Health, the City of Tshwane and the University of Pretoria's Department of Family Medicine. COSUP was started because of the increase in substance use and the lack of services for substance users in Tshwane.

Tshwane District Hospital is housing one of its well-functioning sites at Ward 53. COSUP helps people, families and communities to understand and manage substance use and related risks. The Tshwane District Hospital COSUP team consists of a hospital liaison officer, clinical associate, social worker, peer educator and several doctors.

The COSUP hospital liaison officer visits the wards daily to identify substance users, to give them information on harm reduction and to assist them in linking with their families. On discharge from the hospital, they are referred to the nearest COSUP site for further management. They are offered an opportunity to attend group sessions, which are managed by a COSUP social worker, and they are also offered skills development along

with other patients and those living in the community and around the neighbouring areas.

COSUP helps to reduce the health risks of substance users, e.g. people who inject substances are given the right to access sterile injecting needles and syringes to reduce the spread of HIV and Hep C. COSUP uses the community-oriented primary care (COPC) approach. COSUP is a public health approach that takes health care to the people.

COSUP offers medical examinations, assessments, referrals and ongoing medical management of health conditions, and sometimes medications, such as opioid substitution therapy (OST) may be given and managed. Peer educators are also integral members of the COSUP team and offer peer support. This assists users to resolve their substance use disorders and reduce the health burden to themselves and the community.

Community engagement opportunities and impact

There is a huge impact in the community as users enrol and follow up on the programme. They get reintegrated into society.

Community partners

Skills development centres: People Upliftment Programme (POPUP), Tshwane Leadership Foundation (TLF)
Non-profit organisations: Sediba Hope
Ward-based outreach teams (WBOT)

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