

COMMUNITY-ORIENTED SUBSTANCE USE PROGRAMME (COSUP)

The City of Tshwane and University of Pretoria are working together on a project called COSUP (Community-oriented Substance Use Programme). The project was started in response to the growth in substance use disorder in Tshwane, is funded by the City of Tshwane and led by the University of Pretoria, Department of Family Medicine. It has been implemented in collaboration with the Gauteng Department of Health (Tshwane District) and Gauteng Department of Social Development, as well as various NGOs and UP departments, and is based on evidence-based research.

A significant mindset change is required in order to understand and apply this new method.

It is a human rights intervention, and:

- applies harm reduction;
- is implemented through COPC (Community-oriented Primary Care);
- takes place in the community through relationship building;
- applies brief interventions (with the aim of retaining patients);
- provides opioid substitution therapy (OST); and
- implements a needle exchange programme.

It is no longer about a “war on drugs”, “abstinence” and “criminalisation of users”, but about meeting people with respect and care at their level, regardless of choice or circumstance.

In order to meet people who use drugs (PWUD) at their level, we have been building a team of CHWs (community health workers), peers, doctors, clinical associates, nurses, psychologists and social workers. The team is in different regions and sites around Tshwane. The goal is to register patients and retain them in terms of services offered to them, namely:

- psychosocial support – brief interviewing, motivational interviewing, screening;
- needle exchange, HIV, TB, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C screening and medication;
- the cleaning of sores associated with incorrect injection techniques;
- prescription of OST (opioid substitution therapy) and DOT (directly observed treatment);

- peer support;
- skills training;
- possible job placement; and
- transitional housing for the homeless.

The City of Tshwane would like to work with existing structures that are in place around Tshwane while changing the substance use disorder narrative.

The City of Tshwane also wants to:

- promote collaboration between NGOs and the stakeholders in Tshwane;
- build a network between the NGOs, stakeholders, and various role players in drug
- intervention; and
- build a referral system between NGOs, stakeholders, the University of Pretoria, City of Tshwane
- and various clinics and hospitals in and around Tshwane.

Impact

COSUP services are now available in the following regions since the programme was started.

1. Atteridgeville (85 Kommane Street)
2. Daspoort Poli Clinic (cnr Market and Camp Street, Pretoria West)
3. Mamelodi Regional Hospital (Cnr Serapeng and Tsamaya Road, Mamelodi)
4. Ikgeng (21882 Molokoloko Cicle, Mamelodi)
5. Lusaka (cnr Millenyance and Ratshwene Street)
6. Eersterust Community Health Centre (cnr PS Fourie Drive and Hans Coverdale Road)
7. Laudium Community Health Centre (405 Bengal Street, Laudium)
8. Tshwane District Hospital (cnr Steve Biko and Dr Savage, Pretoria)
9. Olivenhoutbosch (cnr Imbovane and Imbongolo Street)
10. Soshanguve
 - a. Elim Tabernacle Church, Inkanyezi Street
 - b. Cnr Aubrey Matlala and Tlou Street
 - c. Reatlegile Centre stand 05030
11. CBD (173 Bosman Street, Pretoria)
12. Sunnyside (116 Joubert Street)

These sites provide health care as well as psychosocial support to the communities and people who are struggling with substance use disorder. COSUP engages with both doctors and students to create an environment in Tshwane where people who use drugs (PWUD) feel cared for, and it promotes “harm reduction” principles.

Community partners

- AttMed
- Botaki Bo Africa
- Daspoort Poli Clinic
- Dream Team Foundation
- Eersterust Community Health Centre
- Elim Tabernacle Church
- Out Wellbeing
 - For the LGBTI community and people who inject drugs (PWID)
 - ◊ Harmless
 - Homeless population group
 - Hospice
- POPUP (People Upliftment Programme)
 - ◊ Salvokop
 - ◊ Soshanguve
- Skills training
- Reatlegile
- SANPUD (South African Network of People Using Drugs)
 - ◊ DUG (Drug Users of Gauteng)
 - ◊ Support Don't Punish
- Sediba Hope
 - ◊ Bosman
 - ◊ Sunnyside
- Tshwane District Hospital
- Tshwane Leadership Foundation
 - ◊ Akanani
 - ◊ House Gillead
 - ◊ House Rivonigo
 - ◊ Potter House
- University of Pretoria Community Engagement
 - ◊ Botaki Bo Africa
 - Arts and creative spaces
 - Reliable House: Place of safety for men & clinic

