

**INSTITUTE FOR HEALTHCARE IMPROVEMENT PARTNERS IN SOUTH AFRICA  
WIN PRESTIGIOUS IMPUMELELO AWARD**

**The ARV Chronic Clubs Project Receives Platinum Award**

**Cambridge, MA – September 7, 2012** – The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) joins with others in congratulating the ARV Clubs project in South Africa for its innovative approach to ensuring that clinics are able to manage large and growing numbers of HIV patients on antiretroviral drugs while maintaining excellent care. This initiative has earned the Platinum Award from the prestigious Impumelelo Social Innovations Centre, and is a partnership with Western Cape Provincial Department of Health, Cape Town City Health, Médecins Sans Frontières/Doctors Without Borders (MSF), and IHI.

Since 2010, over a million HIV patients in South Africa have started taking antiretroviral drugs, which, even when patients are stable, requires a monthly check-in with medical staff and regular visits to a health care clinic. In order to ease the demand this places on South Africa's health care system, MSF (Doctors Without Borders) in Khayeltisha, Cape Town Metro District, created the Adherence Clubs program (renamed ARV Chronic Clubs for this spread project) to streamline the process while still maintaining high-quality patient care. The ARV Clubs are organized by clinic with eligible patients conducting health care visits in groups of 30. The clubs are run by non-clinical staff (peer educators or lay counselors) under the supervision of a clinical team freeing clinicians up to attend to sicker and new patients. Visits include weigh-ins, a symptom screen, an educational seminar on different topics surrounding living with HIV, and an opportunity to discuss issues with the group. Patients are referred to clinical staff if significant individual problems arise, which occurs very infrequently. Medication is pre-packed, which helps club patients avoid pharmacy queues, and annual blood tests and physician visits are synchronized for each club. As a result of the ARV Clubs process, 30 patients complete their check-ins and receive medicine within one hour, while still having the option of seeing a clinician if necessary. Not only are there numerous medical benefits, but members of each ARV Club form peer support networks with one another. The social benefits help to eradicate the longstanding stigma of HIV, and limited resources are more effectively used.

The ARV Clubs program is open to long-term stable patients. IHI's Breakthrough Series Collaborative was used to help spread the ARV Club model; the aim is to have 30% of all patients on ARVs managed in Clubs. Since the start of the project in December 2010, there are over 400 ARV Clubs in 34 clinics in the Cape Town Metro District managing over 10,000 patients.

“This Award is a wonderful recognition of the important work that is being done through the ARV Clubs project,” said Pierre Barker, Senior Vice President for IHI. “The ARV Clubs model is an inspiring solution to the problem of caring for chronic diseases, which medical providers increasingly face on a global scale. IHI is thrilled to be a partner in this work and will continue to provide support to this effort in South Africa.”

The Award will be used to create a website to make the necessary tools, such as guidelines and registrars, available to an international audience to promote the use of Adherence/ARV Chronic Clubs to other countries with a high HIV burden.

The Impumelelo Social Innovations Centre, formerly the Impumelelo Innovations Award Trust, is a non-profit organization which identifies, rewards, and promotes innovative public-private projects which improve the quality of life of the poor in South Africa. Projects are honored with one of the following distinctions: Social Entrepreneur, Platinum, Gold, or Silver, with runners up receiving a Star merit certificate. The Adherence Clubs program received the Platinum Award from the Impumelelo Social Innovations Centre at the annual Awards Dinner on September 6<sup>th</sup>. To learn more about the Impumelelo Social Innovations Centre, please visit: <http://impumelelo.org.za>.

To learn more about IHI's work in low- and middle-income countries, please visit: <http://www.ihl.org/offerings/Initiatives/LMIC/Pages/default.aspx>.

For more information on Médecins Sans Frontières/Doctors Without Borders, please visit: <http://www.msf.org.za>.

#### ***About IHI:***

*The Institute for Healthcare Improvement ([www.IHI.org](http://www.IHI.org)) is an independent not-for-profit organization that works with health care providers and leaders throughout the world to achieve safe and effective health care. IHI focuses on motivating and building the will for change, identifying and testing new models of care in partnership with both patients and health care professionals, and ensuring the broadest possible adoption of best practices and effective innovations. Based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, IHI mobilizes teams, organizations, and increasingly nations, through its staff of more than 100 people and partnerships with hundreds of faculty around the world.*

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