MINISTER FOR HEALTH MESSAGE
WORLD AIDS DAY 2016

Once again Seychelles joins hands with the rest of the world to commemorate World AIDS Day 2016 under the theme ‘Hands Up For HIV Prevention’.

World AIDS Day gives us the opportunity for people worldwide to unite in the fight against HIV, to show their support for people living with HIV and to commemorate people who have died. World AIDS Day is also a time to reflect on our shared work, with other civil societies and global partners, to respond to the overwhelming pandemic of HIV and AIDS in the world, as well as in our country.

In Seychelles, the HIV and Hepatitis C epidemics are still on the increase and the modes of transmission have changed from heterosexual to injecting drug use. Additional to that, HIV and Hepatitis C co-infection is fast becoming a new trend among specific groups. Based on analysis revealed by the latest statistics, HIV and AIDS and Hepatitis C continue to be of major public health importance for our small islands.

Since 1987 to October 2016, the Health Department has reported 830 cases of HIV of which 61% are males and 39% females. From January to October 2016, 62 new persons have been tested positive.

There has recently been a dramatic increase in the number of new cases of Hepatitis C detected. From 2002 to date, there are 761 cases of Hepatitis C. The majority affected is men in their productive years.
Since the start of the epidemics, the ministry has remained committed towards reversing the epidemics and providing support to those affected. Medications to HIV patients are provided free of charge. Prevention of mother to child transmission is a success story. People on treatment are living longer and their quality of life has improved with less AIDS-related illnesses.

For the intravenous drug users a methadone substitution programme is already in place. To complement this programme and other harm reduction strategies, since June 2016, the ministry has started to implement a needle syringe exchange programme.

United Nations Member States have committed to implementing a bold agenda to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030 during the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Meeting on Ending AIDS, held in New York, June 2016.

To reach this goal, we need to strengthen our efforts to retain people living with HIV into care, and develop new strategies to ensure that there is effective follow up. We need to reduce stigma and discrimination towards those seeking the HIV and hepatitis C services.

We need to reinforce the combination of prevention activities with care and support for people infected and affected by HIV to meet the felt needs of the communities involved.

Community based approaches in HIV/AIDS prevention education are a viable strategy in empowering groups through involvement and participation.

These approaches will help to break the culture of dependence on the Ministry responsible for Health.

We must find ways and means to strengthen information systems for HIV prevention at all levels and align our programs with the new ways of HIV transmission and relook at strategies targeting evidence based practices.
We need to scale up our HIV testing and counselling services uptake, by addressing a range of communication issues including confidentiality, stigma related to services, and quality improvement;

We need to make accessible both Pre and Post-Exposure Prophylaxis for HIV especially to the key population.

We must ensure that 'NO ONE IS LEFT BEHIND'.

Ending AIDS will require strong leadership and the engagement of people living with HIV, communities, civil society in partnership with governments ministries, faith based organisation as well the private sector to offer a more coordinated HIV prevention response.

Isi Sesel, Gouvernman in fer sir, ki tou dimoun ki pe viv avek VIH/ SIDA I annan akse avek tretman apropriye e akse avek lezot sipor moral e sikolozik.

Me plis ki zanmen, nou konsyan ki se pa zis tretman ki konte. Se osi lafason ki koman en sosyete ki nou entegre bann dimoun ki pe viv avek SIDA, e bann dimoun ki pli a risk dan nou sosyete.

Nou tou nou bezwen lev nou anmen anler e montre nou sipor.

Lev nou lanmen anler pour dir ki nou’n pare pour ganny teste. Atraver sa tes nou montre legzanp, nou ranforsi nou zefor prevansyon anmenmtan ki nou montre solidarite avek bann ki viv avek VIH/ SIDA.

Lev nou lanmen anler pour dir ki nou pou entansifye zefor pour siport bann sitwayen pli a risk.
Lev nou lanmen anler pour asire ki nou popilasyon i ganny sansibilize lo bann risk, e osi lo lenportans pour anpes diskriminasyon. Annou asire sirtou ki sa mesaz i rezonnen pour nou bann zenn dan bann lekol e dan kominote.

Lev nou lanmen anler pour nou donn nou sipor moral e spirityel tou bann dimoun ki pe viv avek VIH/SIDA, e tou bann fanmiy e endividi ki a risk e ki ganny afekte dan en fason ou en lot. Nou lapriyer e nou mesaz sipor i kont pour bokou.

Lev nou lanmen anler- nou tou ansanm- pour prevansyon VIH/SIDA e pour son eliminasyon.

Sa i pa zis en rev. Atraver nou aksyon, i en lobzektif ki nou kapab realize.

Mersi zot tou pour zot sipor.

Ministry of Health and Social Affairs