

Piramal Swasthya partners with NACO to launch India's First National AIDS helpline - 1097

- More than 80 percent of women and approximately 70 percent of men in India do not have comprehensive knowledge about HIV/AIDS.
- NACP IV goal is to reduce new infections by 50% (2007 Baseline of NACP III)
- 1097 helpline part of the fourth phase of the National HIV/AIDS Control Programme (NACP IV).
- Helpline to support 8 local languages

New-Delhi, 1st Dec, 2014: On the occasion of World AIDS Day, Piramal Swasthya part of Piramal Foundation has partnered with PSI on behalf of the National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) to launch **India's first national AIDS helpline – 1097.**

More than 80 percent of women and approximately 70 percent of men in India do not have comprehensive knowledge about HIV/AIDS. This is the first time where a national toll free number has been launched to provide information and tele-communication requirements of the population at higher risk to HIV infection. The goals of the fourth phase of the National HIV/AIDS Control Programme (NACP IV) are aligned with the government's 12th Five-Year-Plan.

PSI/NACO has selected Piramal Swasthya in a competitive bid. It already has 104 helpline as a solution to India's citizens' health information access problem. 104 helpline provides medically validated advice, counseling services and directory information. The healthcare helpline has serviced over 74 million callers across 6 states – Assam, Chhatisgarh, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Jharkhand in partnership with the respective state governments.

Dr. Balaji Utla, Head – Piramal Swasthya, said, "The 1097 National AIDS Helpline is a remarkable initiative by the government and we are very proud to be the chosen implementing partners. As Piramal Swasthya we run the 104 Healthcare Helpline in 6 Indian states and have reached out to 70 million people. Hence, this partnership for the 1097 National AIDS Helpline is a natural progression of our desire towards making healthcare accessible, affordable and available to all segments of the population, especially those most vulnerable. We are thankful to PSI/NACO for having chosen us as their preferred partners to work towards educating the masses on HIV/AIDS."

The 24X7 National AIDS Helpline call center is a one stop solution for citizens of India for Comprehensive Information on AIDS, Counseling Services, Information directory/referral service and Grievance Redressal (complaints & feedback escalation). It will be accessible in 8 languages - Hindi, English, Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Marathi, Assamese & Bengali.

With the help of Piramal Swasthya's 'Hub and Spoke' model where the hub will be located in Hyderabad that will detect incoming calls, and basis which the call will be forwarded to a regional level call centers (spokes) depending on the language chosen by the caller. All call centers will be staffed by trained and experienced counselors. The counsellors will be from Nursing, Paramedics, Sociology, Psychology, Social Work, etc. background and have

undergone counseling skills training at Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) in collaboration with NACO. Through this model government aims to achieve its goals for the fourth phase of NACP which is reducing new infections by 50% and providing comprehensive care, support and treatment to all persons living with HIV/AIDS.

With the scale up of targeted interventions, Information Education and Communication (IEC) campaigns as well as care, support and treatment services in the country under NACP IV, it is expected that the national helpline will be a key milestone towards universalizing access to information and counselling on HIV and AIDS. It is hoped that the helpline enhances the uptake of HIV counselling and testing as well as other services nationwide contributing towards achieving the NACP IV goals.

About Piramal Foundation:

Piramal Foundation formally started in the year 2007. Today it addresses key issues in the sectors of healthcare (Piramal Swasthya), water (Piramal Sarvajal), education (Piramal Foundation for Education Leadership), livelihood creation (Piramal Udgam) and youth empowerment (Piramal Fellowship). It operates across 17 states in India, employs over 2000 people and impacts the lives of over 80 million.

About the Piramal Group:

The Piramal Group, led by Ajay G. Piramal, is one of India's foremost business conglomerates with a global footprint. With operations in 30 countries and brand presence in over 100 countries, the Group's turnover exceeded \$1 billion in FY2014. The Group's diversified portfolio includes presence in industries like healthcare, financial services, healthcare information management, glass packaging and real estate.

Driven by the core values of knowledge, action and care, the Group steadfastly pursues inclusive growth, while adhering to ethical and value driven practices. Piramal Foundation, the philanthropic arm, has initiatives running across healthcare, water, education, livelihood creation and youth empowerment in seventeen states in India.

For media enquiries, please contact:

PIRAMAL ENTERPRISES: Akansha Pradhan / Riddhi Goradia Corporate Communications, Piramal Group Contact: +91 22 3351 4082 / 4083 akansha.pradhan@piramal.com riddhi.goradia@piramal.com	PUBLIC RELATIONS CONSULTANT: Sheetal Jobanputra / Candida Pereira MSLGROUP Tel: +91-22- 33557500 Mobile: +91 7498657712 / +919820803237 Sheetal.jobanputra@mslgroup.com / candida.pereira@mslgroup.com
---	--