

SECRET

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**MEMORANDUM OF THE HONOURABLE COMMISSIONER FOR HEALTH, KANO STATE ON PILOTING THE
INTEGRATION OF PEOPLE WHO INJECT DRUGS (PWID) INTERVENTION IN THE WORK OF “EMINENT
PEOPLES FORUM”.**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memo is to inform the Council on piloting the integration of people who inject drugs (PWID) intervention in the work of “Eminent Peoples Forum”.

BACKGROUND

For over 2 years, Kano State Agency for the Control of AIDS has partnered with Society for Family Health to implement a Global Fund supported intervention among persons who inject drugs (PWID) in the state. The intervention promotes behavior change using minimum prevention package of intervention (MPPI) leading to break in the transmission of HIV. The HIV prevention team in the state has worked directly with the PWIDs, parents of PWID, law enforcement agents, and relevant stakeholders to facilitate better access to prevention services. While this intervention is ongoing in about nine states, Kano SACA understood the peculiarity of the state and has initiated an advert on the intervention that empowers the PWID to sustain the behavior change and become better citizen. The state is piloting the integration of PWID intervention in the work of Eminent Peoples Forum.

The Eminent Peoples Forum is a creation of the Inspector General of Police established at the State and LGA levels to support the Force in addressing security challenges through ‘mediation and social control’. The membership of the forum includes community, traditional and religious leaders, retired senior security officers and other stakeholders.

CONTENT

The integrated prevention initiative is being piloted in Gwarzo LGA, with high cases of drug abuse and its consequences. The EPF in the LGA is fully functional and it is comprised of members from diverse background. The forum is chaired by a former Director General of Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria and with members that include the District Head, LGA Chairman, DPO, NDLEA Coordinator, representative of civil society, leaders of major tribes, and youth groups among others. The forum created Youth and Education Sub-Committee that focuses on drug abuse among the youth in the LGA. The sub-committee work closely with the project team to create awareness and educate the local public on the consequences of injecting drugs and other forms of drug abuse; promote acceptance and support for drug abusers, encourage community to be open about drug abuse at family or community level and create enabling environment for the conduct of peer sessions and referral services for PWID.

The partnership with the Eminent Peoples Forum has encouraged more PWID to participate in peer education and other HIV prevention services that has resulted in marked reduction in the intake of drugs among the PWID, increasing support of families and communities to PWID in terms of rehabilitation and other social support and there has been a refocus of the NDLEA attention from the users to the sellers of the illicit drugs in the community. More so, the project team has facilitated access of the Forum to information about PWIDs who

require specific support including, graduates who need employment, artisans who are in need of work tools, drop out who want to return back to school and students who requested for WAEC fees to write SSCE.

The integration is yielding positive results as the community is owning and actively participating in the intervention and hopefully achieves better outcome of reduced HIV prevalence among the youth and improved security within the communities.

PRAYERS

Council is hereby invited to note that:

1. for over 2 years, Kano State Agency for the Control of AIDS has partnered with Society for Family Health to implement a Global Fund supported intervention among persons who inject drugs (PWID) in the State;
2. the intervention promotes behaviour change using minimum prevention package of intervention (MPPI) leading to break in the transmission of HIV;
3. in order to ensure improved community support for the intervention Kano State decided to involve the Eminent Peoples Forum in the implementation;
4. the Eminent Peoples Forum is a creation of the Inspector General of Police established at the State and LGA levels to support the Force in addressing security challenges through 'mediation and social control';
5. the membership of the forum includes community, traditional and religious leaders, retired senior security officers and other stakeholders;
6. the integrated prevention initiative is being piloted in Gwarzo LGA, with high cases of drug abuse and its consequences;
7. the partnership with the Eminent Peoples Forum has encouraged more PWID to participate in peer education and other HIV prevention services which resulted in marked reduction in the intake of drugs among the PWID, increasing support of families and communities to PWID in terms of rehabilitation and other social support and there has been a refocus of the NDLEA attention from the users to the sellers of the illicit drugs in the community;
8. the integration is yielding positive results as the community is owning and actively participating in the intervention and hopefully achieves better outcome of reduced HIV prevalence among the youth and improved security within the communities; and
9. the interesting collaboration between the Eminent Peoples Forum and the State against the fight on drugs, crime and HIV.

Honourable Commissioner for Health, Kano State

JUNE, 2018