NAGURU TEENAGE INFORMATION AND HEALTH CENTRE (NTIHC)

“A place of their own”

Naguru Teenage Information and Health Centre (NTIHC) is the pioneer youth clinic in providing adolescent sexual reproductive health services since 1994. The facility has 22 years’ experience of youth programming and is providing sexual and reproductive health services to an increasing large volume of youths. Formerly located at Naguru Health Centre IV in Nakawa Division, NTIHC has since 2009 relocated to Kiswa Health centre opposite Shell fuelling station at the Village Mall Bugolobi. The centre targets the age groups of 10-24 years. The main catchment area is Kampala district, but clients also come from the neighbouring districts.

Recent service expansion

Peter Mpinga the Programme Director at Naguru NTIHC says services have been expanded to an even bigger number of young people through youth corners set up at every Kampala City council Authority (KCCA) health facility to deal with the overwhelming numbers of children they have to attend to. In total 24 youth corners have been set up in the central region. Mpinga says the ideal would be for government to set up these corners in all corners of the country starting with all district hospitals.

Objectives of NTIHC

• To increase awareness, motivation and adoption of safe adolescent sexual reproductive health behaviour
• To advocate for adolescent sexual reproductive health and rights
• To increase accessibility and utilization of adolescent sexual reproductive health services

Medical services

Young people are given attention on matters related to sexually transmitted diseases (STD) diagnosis and treatment, pregnancy testing, antenatal services, dealing with menstrual problems, problems of growing up like acne, post abortion care, infertility, nutrition, drug abuse and hygiene. They are also given treatment for other ailments like malaria, skin problems, abdominal pains, headaches, other pains and discomforts.

Antenatal services

Teenage pregnancy remains a challenge in Uganda. Antenatal services were started in 2004 at NTIHC to respond to the increasing number of positive pregnancy tests carried out at the Teenage Centre. This service has been appreciated by young people with an average daily attendance of over 30 mothers.

Counselling services

This is another major service which is provided mainly to supplement the medical services. Counselling is done on among other issues like sexual problems, relationships, hygiene, child care and substance abuse.

HIV Counselling and Testing (HCT):

Under the support of Population Council-Makerere University, AIDS Information Centre and Horizon International, youth friendly HCT services were started in 2002. This was the first initiative of this kind in the region specifically targeting young people. By the end of 2011, 80,420 visits by young people had been made to utilize this service.

Condom promotion and distribution

As a prevention strategy for unwanted pregnancy, HIV and other STIs, NTIHC conducts condom education sessions both on site and in outreaches as well as distribution of condoms.

Behaviour Change Communication /Advocacy

NTIHC has a Toll Free Help Line: (0800112222). From 8am-5pm counsellors are on hand to give information and counselling to young people who urgently need help. To increase young people’s access to adolescent and sexual reproductive health information, the toll free help line was installed in August 2002. This service is utilised more by the male than female clients. By the end of 2011, 64,667 calls had been made by males compared to 34,383 calls by female young people.

Teen Radio Program:

The youth live phone in radio talk show started in September 1998 with the aim of increasing the adolescent and sexual reproductive health awareness among youth aged 10-24yrs. This was a response to low clientele levels of females and particularly those out of school. Rebecca Nabossa a counsellor at NTIHC says the program carried on local radio has played a crucial role of increasing access and awareness of adolescent and sexual reproductive health services and information to the youth. It’s the second lead source of information to new clients about the services available at the youth clinic.

Parental Radio Program:

From information collected by NTIHC there was a need to reach the young adolescents before they became sexually active. Reaching the 10-14 year age group with accurate and relevant information was a challenge to the NTIHC. One strategy to reach this age group was through the parents. As a result another radio program (the parental radio show) was launched. Its main purpose is to equip parents with knowledge and skills of how to handle young people especially the 10-14 years, but also to seek for their support to promote adolescent and sexual reproductive health. It’s because of this program that parental referral has reached to be the third lead source of information about the services at the youth clinic.

Outreaches:

NTIHC is from time to time called upon to conduct outreaches in communities like markets, schools, organised youth groups, parental groups and organised villages groups in this special emphasis is on reaching out of school young adolescents.

Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials:

Since inception NTIHC has been involved in the distribution of IEC materials and availing audio visual information through educative films. This arrangement is considerate to both in school and out of school young people in a way that IEC materials are availed in both English and in the local language (Luganda) used in the area.

Training

The organisation is involved in training at both local and international levels. The centre has been used as a practicum site by a number of training institutions. Trainees from the Ministry, institutions, NGOs, and schools are trained in provision of youth friendly services. Government and other partners also identify NTIHC as a place appropriate for field visits.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

NTIHC has a well-established M&E Department that overlooks the implementation of activities to ensure compliance with the plans and set standard. Periodical evaluations are conducted in form of operational studies results of which inform programs.