



SADAG Tel 011 262 6396
Website www.sadag.co.za
Suicide Crisis Line 0800 567 567
Pharmadynamics Police Line 0800 20 50 26
Astra Zeneca Bipolar Helpline 0800 70 80 90
Sanofi Sleeping Disorders 0800 753 379
Substance Abuse Helpline 0800 12 13 14
E-mail zane1@hargray.com

December Newsletter



Before you go away this Christmas - remember this is a very difficult time for many people living with mental illness or who are on their own after the loss of a loved one.

The Holidays are particularly busy for SADAG whose volunteers respond to over 70 000 calls each year.

Please donate today to show your support and thanks for 15 years of free service, advocacy, education, referrals and help that SADAG gives to our most vulnerable individuals throughout South Africa.

[Click here](#) to donate online via credit card, or send a cheque to:

PO Box 652548
Benmore
2010

DONATE TO SADAG NOW!



Account Name: The South African Depression and Anxiety Group
Account Number: 592 511 50677
Bank: First National Bank
Branch Code: 251 255

HOW CAN YOU HELP

R25 pays for to support a caller for 10 minutes on our toll-free helpline and send them brochures and information for themselves and a family member

R50 pays for sending a school 100 fact sheets about Teen Suicide Prevention as well 100 stickers with our contact details

R100 pays for our costs to set up a support group by sending them a start up pack, DVDs, brochures and stickers

R250 pays for training of 1 volunteer to work in our Suicide Call Center which is open 7 days a week from 8am - 8pm

R500 helps us present suicide prevention talks to a local school for 500 students and hand out brochures and stickers

R1000 delivers the SADAG newsletter to over 10 000 subscribers in South Africa

Vote Now to Rethink Mental Health & Improve Community Wellbeing - SADAG a finalist from 42 countries



SADAG has been shortlisted for the Ashoka Changemakers Awards! This is very exciting



and a great honour as there were over 340 entries from 42 countries offering bold solutions to expand our understanding of mental health and wellness. These include a school campus initiative that is raising awareness about the effects of suicide by using a striking display of 1,100 backpacks; a team of personnel specialists who are trained to work with mental health clients and their potential employers; and an outreach program targeting autistic youth in refugee camps. South Africa's entrant is the South African Depression and Anxiety Group for their work in Speaking Books for schools to prevent teen suicide and to help rural patients understand mental health even if they cannot read. Ashoka's Changemakers provides a platform to change our society's narrow perceptions and improve the rights and resources for individuals living with serious mental illnesses.

We've done our bit now please vote for us. Seems like a lot of private info to give but you only need to fill in the first four or five questions and you are registered.

To support the South African Depression and Anxiety Group visit <http://www.changemakers.com/en-us/mentalhealth> from November 24 until December 9th to cast your vote.

It's easy, just follow these simple steps:

1. Log onto <http://www.changemakers.com/en-us/mentalhealth>
2. Click on "TO VOTE"
3. Put in your email address
4. Choose a password
5. Vote for SADAG

Patient Group Education Forum on Proposed NHI

Pfizer co-ordinated a well-attended patient education forum on the proposed National Health Insurance for South Africa. The participants, including SADAG, came from 24 different organizations and a representative from the Patient Health Alliance of Non-Governmental Organisations (PHANGO), Mr Fanie du Toit attended. The outline of the discussion, led by Prof Heather McLeod, was to inform the patient advocacy groups about the key ideas in the National Health Insurance proposals and to enable the groups to take advocacy positions where appropriate.

The current proposal contains extraordinary contradictions and states, among other points that everyone will get free care from a choice of public and private providers (with a general practitioner as the first point of contact) but patients will need to use NHI providers. Patient advocacy groups need to obtain as much information as they can and lobby for effective government engagement through agreeable advocacy strategies to inform policy on how the proposed scheme can also impact negatively on patients.



A big thank you to Pfizer's Timna Kleinburg-Russell and Dale Joynt for their hard work.

SADAG receives a Special Ministerial Award at the 7th Annual CPSI Public Sector Innovation Awards 2009

The Centre for Public Service Innovation CPSI was established in 2001 by the Minister for Public Service and Administration, The Honourable Minister Richard Masenyani Baloyi. The mandate of the CPSI is to drive and entrench innovation in the public sector through the development of sector-specific innovative, sustainable and responsive models, gadgets and other solutions for improved service delivery. The CPSI facilitates projects aimed at demonstrating the value of innovative solutions and activities aimed at creating an enabling environment within the public sector to support and sustain innovation.

This year's CPSI Annual Awards had an added flair to the event. The Honourable Minister R. M. Baloyi singled out and celebrated those organizations who continually strived to do things differently, not for its own sake but to improve service delivery, inspire citizens' confidence and the commitment to move beyond developmental challenges. There were two organizations that were nominated for the first ever Special Ministerial Award, SADAG was among the recipients of this prestigious award. In addition a cheque for R10 000 was presented to Elizabeth Matare, the SADAG CEO.

Our appreciation to the Honourable Minister for believing in our social strategy communication tool, the Speaking Book.



Talisman Talk



SADAG delivered a talk on Mental Health Matters to the Talisman Foundation, on the 5th of November 2009. The talk was attended by 30 people (half of them were staff members from the Talisman

Foundation and the other half were patients from this facility. The talk went smoothly, with patients getting involved, being interactive, and asking very interesting questions. The response from the talk was good and hopefully insightful.

The "head" of the institution then gave the SADAG counsellors a tour of the facilities, which was a great experience. They have nice comfortable rooms for each patient, a TV room with flat screen TV on each floor, a fully-equipped gym, arts and culture programs, a vegetable garden, and learning activities which each person needs to attend. The foundation keeps its residents busy by giving them chores and allowing them time in the library. The residence is really clean, and it is apparent that the staff at the Talisman Foundation are doing a great job. Thank you for the invitation.

Bullying School Talk

Shai, Deepa and Katrina did talks at the Waterstone College in Kibler Park, for 160 learners on bullying and cyber-bullying in particular. The talks were a great success and the two female counsellors both commented how complex the lives of teenage girls had become. There were many questions, all of which came from personal experiences. It seemed that in this school cyber-bullying was a bigger problem for the boys than the girls. MXit seemed the main method, but many girls were also getting people they don't know calling their cell phones. One girl had someone impersonating her on facebook. There was a real mix of problems and how the girls took it. Most were clearly intimidated by it. There were also a number of questions about depression and suicide, which we will cover in the New Year. A big thank you to Jill for organising the talk.

Dell talk

Dell have been an avid supporter of SADAG for many years. All our computers are Dell - most of them donated to us! SADAG delivered a talk on Suicide and Depression to 15 staff members at the offices of Dell, on the 18th of November 2009. The audience was very interested and asked some insightful questions. Some people seemed to know a lot about mental health, whereas others didn't know much about it. The reason for this, was that the people who knew a lot had suffered from a mental health disorder themselves or knew of someone (e.g. a close family member) who suffered from mental health problems. It was good that SADAG was able to get this information to the people who knew so little about mental health, as well as helping the others with additional contacts and websites.



Arysta LifeScience Wellness Day

On the 1st of December the Arysta Life Sciences company asked SADAG to man a stand to hand out brochures and materials at their wellness day at two different venues in KZN, Canelands and Mt Edgecombe. Both venues were manned by SADAG support group leaders, Joy Chiang and Premella Naidoo. Joy from SOLOS support group manned the stand at Mount Edgecombe and Premella from the Tongaat support group manned the stand in the Canelands. Both wellness days were very successful, many questions were asked about depression and unemployment from the staff who compromised of factory workers, admin staff and management. Quite a few people were unaware of what SADAG offers and were very pleased to find out about the suicide toll free number, sms line and support groups. The day focused on overall wellness and everyone that attended received various informative handouts about depression and ways to cope, as well as from other stands that focused on HIV/Aids, Cancer, Hypertension, Eye Testing and Blood Donation, Virgin Active, Diabetes, SANCA, etc. A special thanks to both our support group leaders for being there.

Good luck to Chevonne



In 2010, Chevonne will be doing her trauma counselling internship before registering with the HPSCA. She'll be working at the iThemba Rape and Trauma Support Centre in Benoni doing internal counselling for victims of rape and various forms of trauma as well as counselling at mobile trauma units at police stations which will deal with immediate support for people who have been victims of crime. She'll be very busy as she'll be splitting her time in the Boksburg Kidz Clinic, helping children prepare for testimonies in court through role play and therapy and running groups for juvenile sex offenders in the primary and high schools around the East Rand. We wish her all the best!! Thank you for working on all our administration this year, with all the counsellors shifts and co ordinating the training. Good luck for 2010.

Department of Health signs the Bipolar Disorder Algorithm

A special thank you to Dr Franco Colin, Dr Eugene Allers and Linda Trump for all their tireless hard work in getting medical aid schemes to start looking at fair treatment for mental illness and standardised treatments for the different illnesses. While few schemes have taken the unscrupulous route and not helped patients, the new Bipolar Algorithm will allow any loop holes to close and hopefully patients will get better treatment benefits next year. We have had major problems with patients who have been isolated this year.

Apologies!! www.schizophrenia-window-of-hope.com

We'd like to apologise for any inconvenience caused to people trying to access the Schizophrenia website. Please note that you will need a username and password until further notice.

Thank you SADAG: A word from our callers



"Time heals wounds and there is no quick fix to a problem, but if ever I am grateful to the valuable support, and I would like to thank your organisation (SADAG) for guiding us through the difficult times my husband and I was having with our eldest daughter who is suffering from Bipolar Disorder. We thank you for guiding us in the right direction.

She is far from recovery but she is on the right path. I would like to say to all those parents out there with a similar problem, never give up on your child. Get to understand the problem as your child is sick and never stop loving them and let them know this" (F & C)

"It has been almost six months since I started the process of confirming my diagnosis, and resuming treatment for Bipolar Disorder. I wanted to write to you to thank you. I want to start by thanking you for your support and firm encouragement after I'd written to you to contact a health professional, and seek treatment. I value enormously the fact that you were firm with me, and that you told things to me as they are, without buttering anything up. I also want to thank you for asking the counsellor who spoke with me to contact me. She listened, and cared, and was also a strong support for my wife, and we valued how she helped me to work out a strategy that would enable me to attain the appropriate support without jeopardising my situation at work. I also was able to realise (together with you), that I HAD to take control of my life and this illness that was destroying my life and my family.

So I want to thank you for your encouragement, support and understanding. I am learning to understand my illness better, and at least I now have a support structure, medication, and more knowledge to help me live an empowered life. I will no longer allow this illness to break me (and my family). Some days are harder than others, and I know there will be many more tough days that will challenge my resolve. The difference now is that I WANT things to be better, I WANT to live FULLY, and I want my message to others to be that you always have a choice: You can choose to allow illness and severe challenges to destroy you, or you can choose to find a way to embrace the things you cannot change, and to use your challenging experiences to encourage others to live positive and empowered lives. This is what I have chosen. Thank you, and SADAG, for what you do. I just wanted to remind you again that what you do matters, and makes a real difference in our lives. It has given me back to my family - and given ME back to myself." (T)

None of what we do, what we offer, or the lives we touch daily could happen without our dedicated and compassionate counsellors, staff, and Support Group leaders. A very special Thank You to each and every one of them for their hard work. Best wishes for 2010. We will contact you again in the New Year. Please remember we are open every single day even Christmas day to help and care.

Best Wishes,

Zane

Founder

SADAG

Zane1@hargray.com

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SADAG - 177 Katherine Street, Sandton, 2010, South Africa