

NEWSFLASH E- BULLETIN



National AIDS Commission
Responding to HIV/AIDS in Belize

February 1, 2012

Dear Partners and Friends,

We are pleased to introduce to you your first issue of the News Flash E-Bulletin which will be distributed twice monthly.

This e-bulletin is intended to provide brief and current updates of work done within our national HIV response.

We look forward to your continued support and welcome any inquiries or comments which may be sent to me at ecabanas@nacbelize.org.

Kind regards,

Elio Cabanas
Communications Officer
National AIDS Commission Secretariat

The Research team from the University of del Valle in Guatemala have started to execute the Behavior Surveillance Study. The team conducted a training workshop for the entire staff who will lead the study in the field, as data collectors, clinicians and lab staff. The training covered the protocols for data collection, clinical management and national coordination of the study. The five day workshop from January 17 to January 21 also included the definition of roles, functions, and methodological approaches, ethical standards in research and work session. The BSS study.

given its scale and unique targets, is the first of its kind undertaken in Belize. We have just confirmed that the size estimation is well underway and the BSS component has begun as of Monday of this week.

The Belize Red Cross hosted its Home Care Givers Program Certification Ceremony at Our Lady of Guadalupe Mercy Center Conference Room on January 27, 2012. 24 Students completed the six weeks program based on theory and practical applications. Mason Zelaya is acknowledged as the top performer of the graduating group of this program which is offered twice yearly and now running for more than 12 years!



United Belize Advocacy Movement (UniBAM) launched its "We are One" campaign on January 27, 2012 that included the distribution of arm wrist bands, a series of PSAs, NOH8 facebook site and forums on the basic human rights of sexual minorities. Many media houses attended the event which sought solidarity with all those who respect the rights and dignity of each person despite their sexual orientations. Instructing attorney, Lisa Showman, spoke of the parties involved in the constitutional challenge of Section 53 of the Criminal Code. Preliminary hearing of the case was held on

January 30 at the Supreme Court.



Attorney Antoinette Moore addresses the gathering on Human Rights

The Government of Belize, in collaboration with the University of Belize and Belize's United Nations System, presented a national report in Belmopan on "Eight Goals, One Nation: Accelerating Progress Towards the Millennium Development Goals." The MDGs Scorecard and Outlook Report 2010 provides an assessment of how well Belize has performed in reaching the goals highlighting the improvement of maternal health, halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and ensuring the access to water and proper sanitation. Key presentations included an overview on the MDGs, Health & Gender Indicators MDGs, Women and Politics and Life Skills Literacy Programs.



The NAC Secretariat is now leading the development of the Global AIDS Progress Report 2012 for the reporting period of Jan 2010 to Dec 2011 which is to be completed by March 31, 2012. This national report will contain a comprehensive overview of the AIDS epidemic, the national response to it, the support from the country's development partners and the Monitoring and Evaluation environment. Belize continues to make great strides towards realizing the commitments made in the UNGASS Declaration on HIV and AIDS in 2001 and this upcoming report will reflect the improved performance in key UNGASS indicators.

BFLA, in partnership with the University of Belize and the Ministry of Human Development and Social Transformation continues to lead a local effort, as part of a larger regional network, to promote Gender Equality and Equity. The initiative, called "Champions for Change" continues to engage men in addressing issues leading to gender imbalance. Clearly, men play eminent roles in maintaining and fostering healthy relationships and are therefore key partners in SRH education towards the reduction of gender disparities. Arthur Usher (BFLA), Fermin Olivera (UB) and John Flowers (MOHD) are all focal points for the Champion for Change Secretariat led by Aiawni Tafari. Any interested individual or

parties may contact Arthur Usher at 203-1018. This Champion for Change initiative will be conducting a series of workshops in June which will support the meaningful participation of men in the initiative.
