

# **NPF Helpdesk 2008**

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HIV and AIDS

In collaboration with the XVII  
International AIDS Conference

# NPF Helpdesk history

- NPF Helpdesk began after the IAS Conference in Sydney 2007.
- The AIDS Blog is posted every Monday
- It has several thousand subscribers, more will be added after this conference.
- The aim of the NPF Helpdesk is to keep journalists engaged with the HIV story after the conference is over and we return to the reality of our newsrooms.

# Mythbusting & good practice

- The NPF Helpdesk was born out of a desire to promote accurate reporting of HIV.
- One of the main aims of the blog is to dispel myths about HIV and AIDS.
- This means not just AIDS denialists, but also stories on fake cures for HIV, myths about harm caused by condom use and anti-retroviral treatments.
- It's also about promoting good, ethical journalistic practice.

# Importance of peer review

- Much of the material sourced for the blog comes from peer reviewed medical journals.
- Peer review is the gold standard, it means the study or article has been subjected to the scrutiny of other experts in the area.
- It is the opposite to unsubstantiated health claims, often made by politicians or other opinion leaders.

# Sourcing HIV news

- Much of the HIV information we source comes from websites.
- It's easy to be fooled by a gorgeous looking website that's easy to navigate.
- Check for key indicators and disclosers:
  - who funds the website/organisation?
  - who funds the funders?
  - is the information peer reviewed?
  - is the language respectful of people with HIV?
  - are contact details available for the site's staff?

# More check points

- You also need to check:
  - whether the information is current?
  - does it deal comprehensively with HIV?
  - is there clinical and scientific evidence to back up the statements on the site?
  - does the content contradict widely-held scientific and medical beliefs?
  - are adequate references provided to indicate the source of the information, including statistics?

# Giving voice to people with HIV and AIDS

- Another important element of HIV reporting is ensuring you include commentary from people living with HIV and AIDS.
- Your local HIV or AIDS organisation can provide you with contacts.
- It is more difficult to source this material online - it usually involves a primary interview.

# Key sites

I visit the following sites regularly:

- UNAIDS [www.unaids.org](http://www.unaids.org)

- Global Health Facts

[www.globalhealthfacts.org](http://www.globalhealthfacts.org)

- US Centres for Disease Control [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

- *Journal of American Medical Association*

[www.jama.ama-assn.org/](http://www.jama.ama-assn.org/)

- *Lancet* [www.thelancet.com/](http://www.thelancet.com/)

- *Science* [www.sciencemag.org/](http://www.sciencemag.org/)

- *British Medical Journal* [www.bmj.com/](http://www.bmj.com/)

- *New England Journal of Medicine*

[www.content.nejm.org/](http://www.content.nejm.org/)

# More key sites

Mythbusters and forums:

- AIDS Truth [www.aidstruth.org](http://www.aidstruth.org)
- Global Fund Observer [www.aidspace.org](http://www.aidspace.org)
- My Global Fund [www.myglobalfund.org](http://www.myglobalfund.org)
- Centre for Media and Democracy  
[www.prwatch.org/](http://www.prwatch.org/)

# Blogs & online sites

- Public Library of Science [www.plos.org/](http://www.plos.org/)
- SciDevNet [www.scidev.net/en/](http://www.scidev.net/en/)
- Basic Science Blog [www.tagbasicscienceproject.typepad.com/](http://www.tagbasicscienceproject.typepad.com/)
- Kaiser Daily HIV News [www.kaisernet.org](http://www.kaisernet.org)
- RH Reality Check [www.rhrealitycheck.org/](http://www.rhrealitycheck.org/)
- Global Fund Observer [www.aidsfan.org/index.php](http://www.aidsfan.org/index.php)
- SEA-AIDS (South East Asia AIDS)  
[www.healthdev.org/eforums/cms/individual.asp?sid=96&sname=SEA-AIDS](http://www.healthdev.org/eforums/cms/individual.asp?sid=96&sname=SEA-AIDS)

# Email alerts & newsletters

- Kaisernet [www.kaisernetwork.org/Daily\\_reports/rep\\_hiv.cfm](http://www.kaisernetwork.org/Daily_reports/rep_hiv.cfm)
- UNAIDS [www.unaids.org](http://www.unaids.org)
- Centre for Media and Democracy  
[www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=SourceWatch](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=SourceWatch)
- The medical journals (Lancet etc)
- Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria  
[www.theglobalfund.org/en/](http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/)
- IAVI [www.iavi.org/](http://www.iavi.org/)
- Centres for Disease Control  
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/eid/>  
<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/>

# PLWHA and at risk groups

- Global Network of People Living with HIV and AIDS

[www.gnpplus.net](http://www.gnpplus.net)

- Sex worker organisations

[www.thebody.com/index/whatis/sexwork\\_resources.html](http://www.thebody.com/index/whatis/sexwork_resources.html)

- Injecting Drug User organisations

- Global Forum on MSM and HIV/AIDS

[www.msmandhiv.org/](http://www.msmandhiv.org/)

- International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS [www.icw.org/](http://www.icw.org/)