

The National Aids Control Organization (NACO)

January 13, 2021

In news

Recently, the Union Minister of Health and Family welfare inaugurated the first 'The Grand Finale of the Red Ribbon Quiz Competition' organized by the National AIDS Control Organization and Ministry of Health & Family Welfare

About NACO

National AIDS Control Organization is a division of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare that provides leadership to HIV/AIDS control programme in India through 35 HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Societies.

Evolution of NACO

In 1986, following the detection of the first AIDS case in the country, the National AIDS Committee was constituted in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

As the epidemic spread, need was felt for a nationwide programme and an organization to steer the programme. In 1992 India's first National AIDS Control Programme (1992-1999) was launched, and National AIDS Control Organization (NACO) was constituted to implement the programme.

Vision of NACO

NACO envisions an India where every person living with HIV has access to quality care and is treated with dignity. Effective prevention, care and support for HIV/AIDS is possible in an environment where human rights are respected and where those infected or affected by HIV/AIDS live a life without stigma and discrimination.

Role of NACO

- National AIDS Control Organisation's work and programme evolve and revolve around its twin objective of bringing about HIV prevention and providing treatment to people living with HIV.
- In this mission, NACO establishes an interface with the health service organisations through meetings, seminars and training programmes in sensitising and training healthcare providers, and augmenting services for prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS.
- Through the State AIDS Prevention and Control Societies (SACS) and various NGOs, NACO guides prevention programme at state, district and village level that reaches out to health workers, high risk groups, bridge population and general people, particularly women.
- To improve the visibility and acceptance of its prevention messages NACO seeks active participation of public idols and political leaders.
- Over the years, it has developed innovative means to spread awareness and bring about behaviour change among various high risk groups.
- NACO also works with various school education boards in reaching out HIV education and life skills to highly vulnerable adolescent population of the country.
- It is also working with various government organisations in spreading the message of prevention and addressing the vulnerability of the personnel.

he National AIDS Control Programme (NACP)

India's National AIDS Control Programme (NACP), implemented by the National AIDS Control Organization (NACO) under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, is one of the most successful public health programmes in India today

The National AIDS Control Programme has been implemented by the Government of India as a 100% **centrally sponsored scheme**

through State AIDS Control Societies in the states for prevention and control of HIV/AIDS.

Various phases of the programme

1. **NACP-I:** The first National AIDS Control Programme **was launched in 1992, which focused on the national HIV surveillance system, prevention activities** among High Risk Groups (HRGs) including information on HIV and the blood safety programme.
2. **NACP-II:** It was **launched in 1999 focused on the scale-up of targeted interventions for HRGs, especially prevention, out-reach,** HIV testing & counselling and fostered greater involvement of People Living with HIV (PLHIV) and community networks.
 - The treatment programme was also launched under NACP II. Institutionalization of decentralized programme management through State AIDS Control Society was a key thrust in phase II.
3. **NACP-III:** It was launched in 2007, showed a rapid expansion of prevention, care, support and treatment efforts across the country with a focus on increasing service access points through institutional scale-up and out-reach.
4. **NACP-IV (2012-2017):** It focuses on consolidating the gains made during NACP-III and aims to accelerate the process of reversal of the HIV epidemic.
 - The key strategies under NACP-IV includes intensifying and consolidating prevention services with a focus on HRG and vulnerable population, increasing access and promoting comprehensive care, support and treatment, expanding IEC services for general population and high risk groups with a focus on behaviour change and demand generation, building capacities at national, state and district levels and strengthening the Strategic Information Management System.

National Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS and STI 2017 – 24

The National Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI), 2017-24 was released in 2017. Targets under the 7 year plan:

By 2020, the focus of the national programme will be on achieving the following fast track targets:

- 75% reduction in new HIV infections
- 90-90-90: 90% of those who are HIV positive in the country know their status, 90% of those who know their status are on treatment and 90% of those who are on treatment experience effective viral load suppression
- Elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and Syphilis, and
- Elimination of stigma and discrimination

By 2024, the further achievements envisaged are:

- 80% reduction in new HIV infections
- Ensuring that 95% of those who are HIV positive in the country know their status, 95% of those who know their status are on treatment and 95% of those who are on treatment experience effective viral load suppression