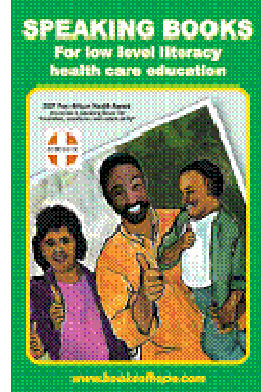




SADAG Goes to Barbados and Wins Silver Award against 52 other countries' Innovations



The CAPAM awards (Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management) held in Barbados in October offered SADAG the opportunity of show casing the Speaking Books, created by them to compete against 52 countries and ministers from around the world .

Developed for Rural countries and Youth in South Africa, books such as 'Understanding your Mental Health' sponsored by Eli Lilly, 'Teen Suicide Prevention' sponsored by De Beers and the Department of Mental Health and 'Living with HIV and Aids doesn't mean living with Depression' by the Department of Health, were all on display alongside many other books on topics such TB, Malaria, Getting Your Government Grants for Disabilities and Vaccines for children.

They attracted huge attention and through the kind support of CPSI, The South African Innovation Hub, SADAG was able to donate books to all 450 delegates. By selling these books to donors, governments and sponsors, SADAG is able to use it as an income generator which helps subsidize our offices and staff who man a Mental Health Call Center which includes toll-free telephone lines dealing with suicide, depression, anxiety, panic, trauma, bipolar, substance abuse, schizophrenia, etc.

The five day event included a presentation to nine ministers and executives from different countries and competition from India, Singapore, Canada and other countries was very strong. It is the first time that South Africa was an Award Winner in this biannual competition.

Barbados is a most amazingly hospitable country and the Prime Minister, Mr David Thompson, and the Houses of Parliament, all hosted dinners in CAPAMs honor.

South Africa's innovation was amongst the most simple but effective technology to ensure health care communications reach the most isolated and low literate communities in South Africa. This hard backed book, which has 16 buttons which all have soundtrack empowering patients to make informed decisions regarding their health care. The sound tracks were shown in a variety of languages including, Zulu, Portuguese, Swahili, Spanish and English.

By using the books the patient is able to listen in their own language at their own pace, in the privacy of their home to help them identify and comply with treatment for many health issues. It is also used to empower communities for education purposes, teaching them how to get government grants for disabilities or old age pensions, as well as information about understanding how drug trials work, and caring for Caregivers.

The CPSI, a division of the Department of Public Affairs, enabled SADAG to attend the awards where the former Minister, Geraldine Fraser Moloketi, and the CEO of CPSI, Thuli Radebe, were both present. By producing a powerful video the CPSI was able to show the judges what a difference the speaking books have made to everyday lives of the most rural patients and community workers. The short video is now available on request to support groups, Community Clinics and Hospital centers.

Subsequently SADAG has now been offered the opportunity to show this innovation off at many other conferences. The next conference being in Uganda as guests of the International Patients Alliance from the UK and the Ugandan Government.

There are now a total of 20 books available which are distributed through clinics, hospitals, community care workers, government departments and schools.

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