

## TA-NPI SOPHUMELELA films - transcript

GREAT LAKES FILM PRODUCTION

25 July 2011

### FILM 2: SOPHUMELELA - Restoring Hope and Dignity, 7'09

00:00:27:18

I tested positive.... I was so shocked. I started to cry thinking "I'm going to die"... So many things were on my mind.

00:00:56:20

At first, I was afraid to tell because of the stigma one gets when people know.

00:01:11:05

So I didn't tell my family. It's only me that they have, they look upon me for support, for everything. I would be killing them by telling them that I'm dying.

00:01:28:19

That was a very difficult time for me... to know that I'm HIV positive and not to tell anyone.

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I was just wasting away, getting thinner by the day, weaker by the day. I was in severe pain, terrible pain.

00:02:01:03

I didn't want to go to Dignity House because it is sort of a hospice. But Dr. Schaefer said "Penny we're going to help you, come."

00:02:15:24

The staff there, they were so loving, kind, understanding, doing everything with a smile, with love... They became my family.

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I said "This is not Dignity House, this is Dignity Home."

00:02:40:12

Dignity House is a palliative care centre and we are in a way like a hospice but we have a very high discharge rate and a low death rate, and that's really just because ARVs do work.

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The difference is quite remarkable 'coz now she can sit up straight.

00:03:04:04

She can drive a wheel chair, at least she is talking now and she eats. And she used to be very thin when she first came here. Now, at least, she is much better.

00:03:23:12

I feel they are treating her with dignity and respect.

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Ooh, she is saying she deserves it.

00:03:35:03

Before we received PEPFAR funding, Dignity house didn't exist.

00:03:40:01

We started right from renovating this building and TAN-PI has helped us right the way along to get our systems in place and to make this an operational care centre.

00:03:55:06

TAN-PI training has helped us tremendously to get the systems in place that we need and to be able to serve our patients comprehensively.

00:04:09:10

Our greater success is seeing patients that have a very low CD4 count, who come in and they are desperately ill....

00:04:18:05

....we look at them and we really doubt if they are going to survive or not. And little by little, as we care for them, we give them the right medication, we give them nutrition, hygiene, pray for them, encourage them, we see them getting better and going home and that's just amazing results that we see.

00:04:47:05

My CD4 count was zero the time I arrived at Dignity House.

00:04:56:13

If you have got a pain that you feel report it to us.

00:05:00:14

We are going to be visiting you until we see that you are better.

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Now it is quite a big improvement in my life now.

00:05:11:00

They come and check my health, if I've got problems I tell them the problems and they help me with my problems.

00:05:24:19

I'm feeling better and better, and better.

00:05:35:21

These people are still looking after me.

00:05:39:18

What does it mean to you when we visit you?

00:05:43:11

These visits open my heart.

00:05:46:08

I feel to get back to work.

00:05:54:03

Because of what Dignity House has done for me, I felt I needed to do something to help others.

00:06:05:12

They asked me if I could come to volunteer and work in that clinic, and I volunteered.

00:06:14:14

I'm running a support group to help those who cannot cope.

00:06:20:09

I choose life, I choose life, my life is important....

00:06:27:11

I am in a better position to tell them that you can do it.

00:06:36:24

So it doesn't mean that if you have HIV you can't work, you can't do anything; and that to be HIV is not the end of your life.