



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Speaker's Office facilitated accredited, gender based violence and HIV/AIDS training programme to local victim empowerment workers.**

The office of the Speaker, in association with Redpeg, is launching an intensive, accredited gender based violence and HIV/AIDS training programme for people who work with survivors of gender based violence. The programme will kick off in February 2015.

The Speaker, Councillor Eleanore Bouw-Spies, explained that the programme aims to build participants' capacity. "We hope to develop participants' knowledge of relevant legislation and guidelines on sexual violence, influencing attitudes and perceptions of gender and human rights issues. We also need to empower them with a fundamental knowledge of HIV and AIDS."

"This is in an effort to contribute to the goals of South Africa's HIV/AIDS National Strategic Plan (NSP), by developing skills of those who deal with survivors of gender based violence, including physical assault and rape," she said. "We hope to increase survivor uptake of post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) as another outcome of the programme. People who experience gender based violence are at a greater risk of contracting HIV, and increased use of PEP reduces this risk."

The training programme is a registered skills programme at NQF level 4 and bears 18 credits. Learners will be required to complete a portfolio of evidence in order to be found competent and receive a certificate. As there is only place for a certain number of learners, interested persons will be asked to complete an enrolment form prior to accessing the programme.

"We believe in the abilities and competence of our very skilled victim empowerment workers," Bouw-Spies concluded. "This training programme will enable them to deliver an even better service to those who need it most. And facilitating this training is only one of the ways in which we try to look after the needs of our residents, and of creating a town where people and nature prosper."

If you would like more information on the programme, please contact Lizel Smith, Knysna Municipality Development Officer at 044 302 6343 or [lsmith@knysna.gov.za](mailto:lsmith@knysna.gov.za), or Redpeg Project Manager Tim Boshoff at 011 794 5173 or [tim@redpeg.co.za](mailto:tim@redpeg.co.za). Redpeg specialises in developing and delivering strategic HIV/AIDS research and training interventions that are relevant and responsive to their clients' needs.

**ENDS**

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