



PRESS RELEASE

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PHARMACCESS FOUNDATION AND NORTH STAR ALLIANCE ANNOUNCE CORE PARTNERSHIP

The newest partner to join North Star Alliance will ensure quality standardization and sustainability across the Roadside Wellness Centre Network

PharmAccess Foundation (PharmAccess) and North Star Alliance (North Star) signed a Memorandum of Understanding, making PharmAccess the sixth core partner of North Star. North Star provides health and safety services to mobile workers and communities living along Africa's transport corridors through a growing network of health clinics (Roadside Wellness Centres). PharmAccess is dedicated to the strengthening of health systems and to expanding access to quality basic health care, including the treatment of HIV and AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa. PharmAccess supports programs and offers services in the areas of medical and administrative capacity building, health insurance, HIV/AIDS and health care workplace programs, health investments and health intelligence.

Over the past two years, PharmAccess has contributed its expertise to improve North Star's public health package through primary research, documentation and the development of practical tools.

By signing the Memorandum, North Star and PharmAccess have formalized their ongoing cooperation and commitment. The partnership with PharmAccess will greatly enhance North Star's capacity to deliver consistent and sustainable high-quality prevention, treatment and care across its growing clinical network.

"The added value of this partnership is the way the organizations complement one another," says Frank Poen, Program Director of PharmAccess.

"North Star has rolled out an effective infrastructure of Roadside Wellness Centres by setting up an innovative public-private partnership, through which specific knowledge, expertise, and IT solutions are connected. Within this smart network, PharmAccess can make a contribution by sharing its know-how in building sustainable health systems."

PharmAccess recognizes four key areas that are interesting to explore within North Star's network of wellness centres. "We can for example develop internationally recognized quality standards for the wellness centres. Formally standardizing the healthcare delivery will make it easier to measure output, which will improve the care provided. Another idea is to introduce health insurance for the targeted groups within the North Star network," explains Frank Poen.

Two other interesting key areas are investment models for healthcare delivery and extensive operational research to measure the impact of interventions.

“In PharmAccess, North Star has found the perfect health partner. They are incredibly innovative and not at all afraid of veering from the global health orthodoxy, but their innovation is firmly rooted in the need to achieve measurable results”, explains Luke Disney, Executive Director of North Star.

“With PharmAccess as a core partner we will be able to ensure that mobile workers and related communities have consistent access to high quality healthcare across our entire network.”

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About PharmAccess Foundation

PharmAccess is a young, fast-growing, international, not-for-profit organization of Dutch origin. Its mission is to improve access to quality health care in Africa, through building sustainable health systems and applying innovative financing mechanisms. PharmAccess establishes public-private partnerships with local organizations and uses an output-based approach.

PharmAccess supports programs and offers services in several areas, such as voluntary health insurance for low-income groups, quality improvement and assurance of clinics and hospitals, financing of small and medium-sized enterprises, support of corporate and national healthcare programs, and clinical and operational research programs.

PharmAccess was founded in 2001, and is currently active in more than 10 African countries. Our activities are financed by donors and clients, such as the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The World Bank, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), large multinationals and the Rockefeller Foundation.

PharmAccess co-initiated the Health Insurance Fund (HIF), the Investment Fund for Health in Africa (IFHA), the Medical Credit Fund (MCF) and SafeCare. The MCF won the SME Finance Challenge People’s Choice Award at the G-20 summit in Seoul, Korea in November 2010.

For more information, visit: <http://www.pharmaccess.org>

About North Star Alliance

North Star works at the crossroads of disease and mobility to ensure that highly-mobile populations, especially truck drivers and their direct and indirect contacts have access to health and safety services. North Star is strengthening national health systems by expanding their reach and plugging the gaps through a network of “Roadside Wellness Centres” (RWCs) located at hotspots along major transport corridors in sub-Saharan Africa. North Star’s unique approach unites the transport and public health sectors in a common response to high impact diseases.

North Star’s RWCs are open to everyone, but designed for the specific health needs of mobile populations. They offer a focused package of prevention and treatment services, including: information, education, primary health care, treatment for sexually transmitted infections (STIs), HIV counselling and testing, and medical referrals.

North Star Alliance is supported by six core partners including International Transport Workers’ Federation, ORTEC, PharmAccess Foundation, TNT, UNAIDS and the World Food Programme and more than 60 strategic and local partners.

Currently North Star is operating 22 RWCs in 10 East and Southern African countries.

More information is available at: <http://www.northstar-alliance.org>

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