

## **Brits Clinic and Affiliated Referral Sites Surpass 2006 Targets for Provision of ART, Palliative Care**

Brits District Hospital in South Africa's North West Province and its affiliated referral sites exceeded their 2006 goals for two key performance indicators by initiating ART for 1,291 patients and providing palliative care services to 2,144 clients with HIV.

Brits HIV/AIDS Clinic and the Foundation for Professional Development (FPD) in Pretoria have been partnering to improve access to HIV/AIDS care and treatment in the rural province with support from the Twinning Center and PEPFAR.

Prior to the partnership's launch in September 2005, only 40 patients received ART at Brits and its referral sites. Today, some 30 times that number receive the life-saving therapy. Even more have access to other HIV-related services, including voluntary counseling and testing, screening for—and treatment of—opportunistic infections, and HIV education.

A key focus of the partnership has been strengthening Brits' capacity to provide integrated HIV-TB prevention, care, and support services to PLWHA.

For example, at Letlabile Clinic—a down-referral site located 27 kilometers from Brits—all HIV-positive clients are screened for TB using a questionnaire developed through the partnership, according to clinic counselor Caroline Sopena. In addition, staff have set up a DOTS program for patients with both HIV and tuberculosis. "I feel confident that I know what I am doing and can help others thanks to the training I have received through this partnership," Sopena says.



Trained in 2006 through the partnership, Caroline Sopena now works as an HIV/AIDS counselor at Letlabile Clinic.