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90-90-90, a game changer to the fight against HIV/AIDS

Nkqubela TB Hospital opens a new XDR-TB unit

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FROM THE EDITOR

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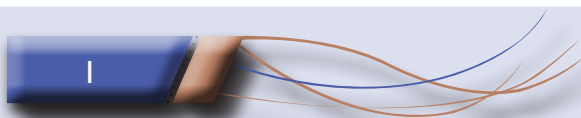
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90-90-90, A GAME CHANGER TO THE FIGHT AGAINST HIV/AIDS



Health Professionals rendering services as part of efforts to fight HIV/AIDS pandemic.

“Although many strategies will be needed to close the book on the AIDS epidemic, one thing is certain. It will be impossible to end the epidemic without bringing HIV treatment to all who need it”, UNAIDS 2014. This is based on research showing that early, life-long HIV treatment does not only improve the health of people living with HIV but can also dramatically reduce HIV transmission.

It is based on this and the experience acquired over the years of dealing with the HIV/ AIDS pandemic

that the UNAIDS proposed ambitious set of targets dubbed 90-90-90 for the global scaling-up of HIV treatment. These new treatment targets reflect the critical paradigm shift in the approach to treatment scale-up. Rather than focusing solely on those receiving treatment, the new targets recognize the need to also focus on the quality and outcomes of antiretroviral therapy as treatment services are scaled up. In particular, these new targets address progress along the HIV cascade of engagement in care, measuring the degree to which programmes are meeting their ultimate goal of viral suppression.

Perhaps the most important aspect of this new set of targets for the developing countries like South Africa and the Province like the Eastern Cape in particular is that it prioritises equity. The new targets recognise that the world will not end the AIDS epidemic unless all communities affected by HIV have full and equitable access to life-saving treatment and other prevention services. In particular, the 90-90-90 targets demand rapid progress in closing the treatment gap for children, adolescents and key populations, using rights based approaches. They also emphasize speed in scale-up and early initiation of HIV treatment in a manner consistent with human rights as early scale-up enables the response to begin to outpace the epidemic itself and enhances long-term economic savings.

So what is this 90-90-90 set of targets? This is the world's ambitious goal, through UNAIDS, to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030. UNAIDS acknowledges that for this goal to be achieved, expedited scale-up will be required. This include making sure that 90% of all people living with HIV know their HIV status, 90% of all people with diagnosed HIV infection receive sustained antiretroviral therapy and that 90% of all people receiving antiretroviral therapy have viral suppression.

The UNAIDS model found that achieving these ambitious targets, including rapid treatment scale-up by 2020, would end the AIDS epidemic as a major global health threat by 2030. Reaching the 90-90-90 target, when complemented by scale-up of other prevention tools, would reduce the annual number of new HIV infections by nearly 90% by 2030. The number of AIDS-related deaths would fall by 80% by 2030. For both HIV incidence and AIDS-related deaths, the envisaged rapid scale-up would result in the sharpest declines between now and 2020, with continued reductions occurring the following decade as the epidemic's momentum is progressively depleted.

Some of the key challenges that need to be addressed to achieve this target include the need for extensive treatment coverage, rampant stigma and discrimination, poor service delivery including the challenge of far flung set of communities that continue to remain unengaged. For example, UNAIDS report found that in some parts of South Africa, rates of treatment utilisation decline as the distance an individual needs to travel to obtain treatment services increases.

Increased funding will also be needed this include cost of drugs, increased service delivery, community mobilization to ensure access to testing and retention in treatment, and pre-ART costs.

In the context of this new set of targets, Eastern Cape Department of Health (ECDoH) is called upon to obviously intensify efforts whilst working more innovatively to ensure expedited treatment scale-up and achieve the maximum impact. Other critical areas include increasing budget combined with allocative efficiency of both funding and programmes. This means identifying the best mix of TB and HIV interventions, target the prioritised geographical areas and groups and adequately funding those with special emphasis on efficient spending.

Ncedo Lisani

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EASTERN CAPE PREMIER LEADS HIS EXECUTIVE TO COMMEMORATE THE WORLD AIDS DAY

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The Eastern Cape Department of Health (ECDoH), led by the Eastern Cape Premier, Honourable Phumulo Masualle took part in the 2015 World Aids Day commemoration. The commemoration was held at Cwecweni Location, Engcobo in the Chris Hani District on 01 December 2015.

Addressing the people at the event, the Eastern Cape Premier, Mr Phumulo Masualle advised them to get tested and know their HIV status. He also mentioned that everyone should take responsibility for their health and further encouraged parents to educate their children about HIV/AIDS.



MEC deliveribg her address during the World Aids Day event.



MEC with Chris Hani and Lukhanji mayors handing overgardening tools to the community



Premier and MEC for Health handing over a wheelchair to a communitth member.



Community members showing off their gardening tools

Currently, the ECDoH is running a number of programmes aimed at curbing the scourge of HIV/AIDS. Some of these programmes include Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT), Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission (PMTCT), Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP), Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI), Anti-Retroviral Treatment (ART) care and support, Home Based Care, Step Down Care, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) funding, marketing and social mobilisation.

The MEC for Health Dr Phumza Dyantyi who is also the chairperson of the Eastern Cape Aids Council encouraged parents to talk with their children about HIV/AIDS as infection of children who are at the age of 12 and 13 years was on the rise. She further advised children to stop going out with older men because they get this virus from them.

The commemoration event held in Engcobo started with planting of seeds at a community garden in Cwecweni Village to encourage the people of the area to make use of their land and the Department also rendered health services on the day.

Among the dignitaries who were present at the commemoration were; Eastern Cape Premier, Mr Phumullo Masualle, MECs from various departments, representatives from the Council of Churches and Traditional Leaders.

The World Health Organisation declared in 1988 that the 1st of December will be the International World AIDS Day honouring the people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS with the aim of increasing awareness, education and fighting prejudice against people living with HIV/AIDS.

Sidumise Madyibi

NKQUBELA TB HOSPITAL OPENS A NEW XDR-TB UNIT



Nkqubela Tuberculosis hospital opened a new XDR-TB unit that will accommodate 60 more patients (30 males and 30 females) suffering from the terminal illness, a TB with extreme drug resistance. The unit which opened on Friday the 20th November 2015 will ease pressure on Fort Grey hospital as it is the only hospital that currently takes the patients with the extreme terminal illness XDR-TB.

The new unit has a lounge fitted area with mechanical ventilations where patients can watch TV. Mr Ludwe Ngwevela, a cured TB patients recalled that when he was first told that he had TB he was in denial and as such refused to take treatment.

“I was more worried about what my peers were going to think of me especially when I had to be admitted at Nkqubela TB hospital, said Mr Ngwevela. After research and advise from relevant people, I eventually got too my senses and realised that being diagnosed with TB is not the end of the World and that TB is curable if I take my treatment regularly and as required, added Mr Ngwevela.

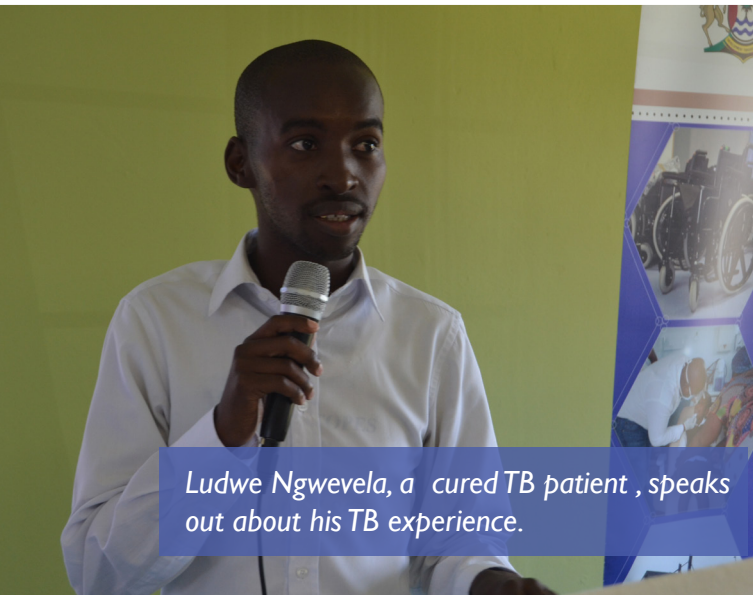
Speaking during the opening ceremony, the MEC for Health, Dr Pumza Dyantyi said she was pleased to be part of the event especially given the fact that it was only 10 days before World AIDS day “as TB and AIDS are often interlinked”.



MEC Phumza Dyantyi, addressing people at Nkqubela TB hospital.



Nkqubela TB hospital CEO Fekade holds the plaque while the MEC cuts.



Ludwe Ngwevela, a cured TB patient, speaks out about his TB experience.

She cautioned that as a society we are illiterate with regards to TB and because of that TB is likely to continue spreading.

MEC Dyantyi also informed those in attendance that government has set target of testing 1.3 million citizens for TB/HIV within a period of 9 months “from today” Dr Dyantyi added that farm and mine workers and those from informal settlements were the priority groups targeted by government. TB is dangerous and contagious, it has killed a lot of people throughout South Africa but the good news is it is completely curable. The plan is to test the patient immediately and if she or he is TB positive introduce treatment as soon as possible, concluded Dyantyi.

Donald Wood foundation, represented by Ms Portia Ngceba was also part of the opening ceremony. Donald Wood foundation is a Non-Government Organisation working tirelessly to reduce the spread of TB and the stigma associated with it. They visit patients with TB, add them into their database, perform aftercare after they have been cured by visiting their communities and also educate people about TB. Nkqubela TB hospital has been active for 50 years and MEC Dyantyi applauded the hospital for ‘doing extremely well judging from the Health dashboard’.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP REAPS POSITIVE RESULTS



MEC, SG, Concillor for Health MNBM, with representatives from SAME Foundation and Truworthis cutting the ribbon at the official opening of Livingstone Hospital OPD

The partnership between the Eastern Cape Department of Health (ECDoH), South African medical Education Foundation (SAME) and Truworthis Foundation has culminated into the infrastructure improvement at the Livingstone Hospital in Port Elizabeth. The improvement include the renovation of the main entrance, Out Patients Department, information office, case office, file collection and cashier office, matron's office, procedure room and central waiting area.

The MEC for Health Dr Pumza Dyantyi received the donation and together with the management of SAME Foundation and Truworthis officially handed over the completed project to the community of Port Elizabeth on the 25 November 2015. Expressing her gratitude to the partners, Dr Dyantyi said "You have contributed towards improving the quality and effectiveness of Public Health and gave the community a life-long gift that will not perish and be used by future generations".

Councillor for Health from the Nelson Mandela Met

ro Municipality, Cllr N. Seale welcomed and thanked both foundations for their donation and pleaded with the community of Nelson Mandela Bay to go out there and show those who always criticise the health sector that the government in partnership with the private sector cares about them.

The Eastern Cape Department of Health's Superintendent General, Dr Thobile Mbengashe acknowledged the work that has been done by the foundations and encouraged partnerships between government and private sector. Patients and communities who come to Livingstone will find a very different hospital because of this partnership, said Dr Mbengashe"

Ms Dianne Pols from SAME foundation said the foundation was very happy to able to make a difference in the delivery of health services and pleaded with the community to look after what they have been given and make sure that it is maintained. She also promised that the project will not be the last one they do with the department.



MEC, SG and delegation at the opening of Livingstone OPD

Meanwhile, Mr Brian Tate also expressed delight on behalf of Truworths at the partnership and the results it yielded. We are very happy to be part of the project and as the organisation we support the view that all South Africans must have access to quality health services, said Mr Tate. He further mentioned that Livingstone is the 6th hospital to receive donation from Truworths.

The MEC said she was honoured to be part of celebrating a milestone with the Port Elizabeth community. The event signifies yet another step in the development of the community, added Dr Dyantyi.

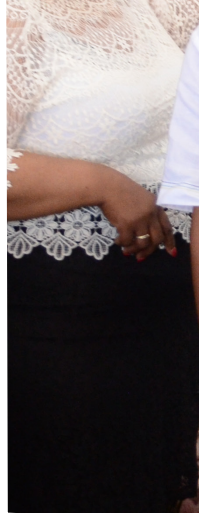
On behalf of the Eastern Cape Department of Health and Nelson Mandela Metro Health District, the MEC welcomed the donation and pledged that the department will make a meaningful use of it and will ensure that patients experience a quality health service at all times. The institution has maintained sound relations with stakeholders, donor organisations and individuals over the past years and regularly receives financial and other resources for specific projects through such partnerships.



MEC and her entourage taking rounds at the newly renovated Livingstone Hospital OPD

This is part of the hospital's plan to upgrade the facility to a standard which is compliant with the tertiary level of health care as well as to comply with the National Core Standards and preparations to move all tertiary services to Livingstone Hospital. The project has already improved the compliance to NCS, increased staff morale and improved infrastructure functionality and aesthetic value for the facility. It will further enable the frontline staff and health professionals to provide an advanced and specialised service contributing to public confidence in the service.

Sidumise Madyibi





FRERE HOSPITAL GOES VIRTUAL



Communications Director Siyanda Manana and MEC Dr Phumza Dyantyi explore the website

To enhance access to the information regarding services offered and various activities taking place at the Frere Hospital, the hospital launched an integrated, adaptable website that is linked with various social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, Google and YouTube. The website is also compatible with almost all the browsers including google chrome, Internet Explorer and can be accessed on any device.

The website appears to have been well received by the stakeholders as it has already attracted considerable traffic including visitors from outside the borders of South Africa, after only 8 days of it having been published. Speaking during the launch, the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) of the Eastern Cape Department of Health (ECDoH) Dr Phumza Dyantyi said it is important for government to keep up with the developmental trends as means of ensuring that the social-economic needs and challenges are addressed in the relevant and most efficient and effective manner.

Dr Dyantyi added that she saw the website as an opportunity to share the critical health related information including the efforts made by the ECDoH to enhance the delivery of health services with the citizens of the Eastern Cape. This is a platform for us to tell our own story about this health centre, positive and negative without exaggerating, adds Dr Dyantyi. She congratulated the team that worked on the project adding that as a communication tool and platform, the website undoubtable offers the department another layer of opportunity to improve delivery of health services.

The website and the related social media platforms give the voice to the hospital patients and stakeholders, help to gauge performance and adds to the systems put together by the hospital to promote accountability. The website which has been designed to align to ECDoH branding guidelines including the look and feel is dynamic and interactive with the route using the map to navigate directions to the hospital. The website menu covers all the items critical to a health centre including the services offered, contacts and directions, leadership, Frequently Asked Questions and the all-important feedback facility.

The launch of the website and social media took place on Thursday 15 October 2015 at the Frere Hospital Resources Health Centre in East London.



Nombulelo Bonga

HAND WASHING A KEY APPROACH TO DISEASE PREVENTION!



The Nelson Mandela Metro Health District celebrated the 2015 Global HandWashing Day on the 14 October 2015 at Booysens Park in Port Elizabeth.

Global hand washing day is a campaign aimed at mobilising and motivating people around the world to wash their hands with soap at critical moments especially after using the toilet, playing with animals, sneezing and before eating or handling food and feeding babies amongst other activities.

Hand washing with soap is one of the most effective and inexpensive ways to prevent diarrhoeal diseases and pneumonia, which together are responsible for the deaths of over 3.5 million children under the age of five every year. According to Ms Fikile Sohumu who is the manager for Health Promotions in Nelson Mandela Metro Health District the event was hosted as an effort to reduce child mortality rates related to malnutrition, respiratory and diarrheal diseases by introducing simple behavioural changes such as hand washing with soap and breast feeding.

School children from surrounding primary schools attended the event and they were educated on the steps of hand washing with soap and encouraged to go and pass the message to their parents at home. Senior Manager Outreach Programme, Community Media Trust – Mr Jonathan Cockburn posed a challenge to the community not to always expect something to be done for them but do something to improve their health. He mentioned that most diseases that are likely to kill children are diarrheal and pneumonia diseases.

Cockburn encouraged people to control bacteria as it is what causes these diseases and encouraged them to take what they learnt at the event to their homes and community. The day was also used to create awareness on breast cancer and the community was educated on how to spot the symptoms of breast cancer as a build-up towards the 2015 Algoa FM Big Walk for Cancer scheduled to take place on the 31 October 2015.



Sidumide Madyibi

EC HEALTH PUTS MENTAL HEALTH UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT



Dr P. Manduna addressing audience on the World Mental Health Day.

The Eastern Cape Department of Health (ECDoH) held the Provincial Mental Health Awareness Day at Zwelitsha Stadium on the 10th November 2015. The awareness campaign is informed by the World Mental Health Day which seeks to provide an international vehicle for public awareness and education on mental health awareness matters. The World Mental Health Day is celebrated on the 10th October annually.

Addressed by the Eastern Cape Department of Health (ECDoH), MEC Dr. Pumza Dyantyi the day saw a hype of activities including (music) singing, plays (drama) and sport all performed by mental health users. Dr Dyantyi appealed to the communities and mental health providers to treat those who suffer from mental diseases with respect and dignity and

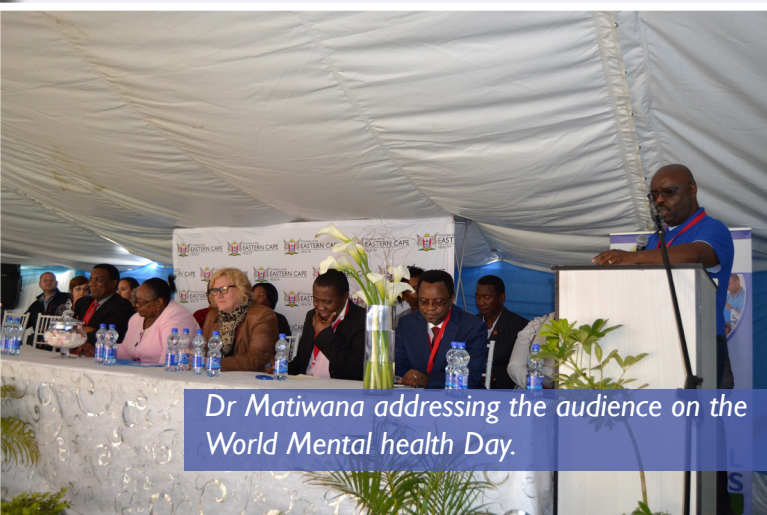
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Mental Health users singing.

not to discriminate against them by calling derogatory names as they are also part of the communities. She added that health providers and NGOs focusing in this area ought to intensify their role of creating advocacy and improving access to mental health services, treatment and rehabilitation. Under the theme Dignity in Mental Health, the 2015 Eastern Cape campaign aims to educate communities, especially the underprivileged on matters of mental illness whilst putting the mental health back on society and government's agenda as the priority. It also seeks to ensure that mental health is integrated into the broader health system and promote social integration of mental health users. The campaign also seeks to create a shared platform with various stakeholders in order to chart an integrated approach to addressing challenges facing mental health issues.



Dr Matiwana addressing the audience on the World Mental health Day.

Speaking in after the event, Dr Tobela Nogela, who is the Director for Specialised Services at ECDoH said the Department sees the event as the beginning of a sustained campaign that will lead to a reduced stigma towards mental health users and improved access to mental health services, treatment and rehabilitation as the MEC has appealed. The communities, especially the marginalised have to know that health services for the mentally ill are available, added Dr Nogela. As part of the ongoing campaign, we also hope to reach out to all the role players and solicit their contributions so as to ensure that mental health is addressed in a systematic and integrated manner, added Dr Nogela. In South Africa mental disorders are ranked in the 3rd place after HIV AIDs and other infectious diseases when looking at the overall burden of diseases in the country.



MEC Dr PP. Dyantyi addressing the audience on the World Mental health Day.

Various stakeholders that participated include among those are community leaders, Departments of Social Development and Education, Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality and Local Primary Health Care representatives.

BF Khumalo and N Lisani



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