

FREE

HEALTH MATTERS Ezempilo

EDUCATE || INFORM || EMPOWER

MARCH • 2015



MARCH 24
WORLD
TUBERCULOSIS
DAY

SPECIAL DOUBLE FEATURE on TB and TB with HIV

School health ● News ● Comic

*And
more
inside!*



health

Department:
Health
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Fighting Disease, Fighting Poverty, Giving Hope

Pregnant or a new baby?

Sign up for MAMA



SMSs ARE FREE!*

Know your HIV status and protect your and your baby's health

Get free medicine to stop your baby getting HIV.

PREGNANT

Send a PLEASE-CALL-ME to one of the numbers below to get FREE SMSs on pregnancy care, preparing for labour and baby care:

- isiZulu.....**071 516 8418**
- isiXhosa.....**071 517 0344**
- seSotho.....**082 075 1675**
- English.....**079 409 3311**
- Afrikaans.....**071 535 8087**

NEW BABY

About to give birth or baby under 3 months? Send a PLEASE-CALL-ME to one of the numbers below to get FREE SMSs on breastfeeding, keeping healthy and baby care:

- isiZulu.....**071 535 9766**
- isiXhosa.....**071 517 2085**
- seSotho.....**082 424 1883**
- English.....**079 419 1214**
- Afrikaans.....**071 570 1823**

** The SMSs will talk about HIV, so you must be comfortable receiving these messages on your phone*



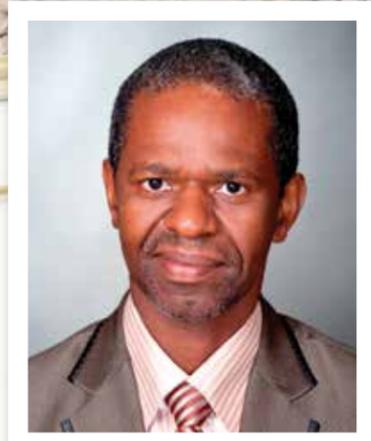
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Fighting Disease, Fighting Poverty, Giving Hope

Message from...

KZN Health MEC, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo



IT IS SAID that when something becomes too familiar, it becomes easy to take for granted. One of the most precious assets that we have at our disposal as South Africans, and which we should never take for granted, is our human rights. Health, and access to health care, is one of the basic human rights which are guaranteed by the Constitution of South Africa.

AS WE CELEBRATE Human Rights Day - and 21 years of democracy - on March 21, we can all look back with pride on the road we have travelled. Despite massive challenges such as the burden of disease and limited financial resources, South Africa is a better country today. The Government, along with its committed cadre of health care workers, has done incredibly well in many spheres, including health.

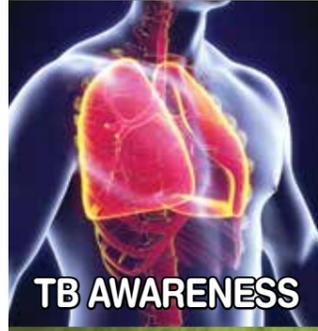
THE FACT THAT today anyone can have access to the best public health care facility anywhere in the country, regardless of the colour of their skin or religion to which they belong, for example, sounds like a miracle. But there is always room for improvement and we can certainly do much more. But as liberated people, we should always guard against abusing the freedoms we have. Rights come with responsibilities. As a society, we should not be "free" to the extent of behaving recklessly, placing our own lives and the lives of those around us, in danger. Those of us who are healthy today should have a responsibility to ensure they stay that way, so as to avoid adding to the burden of disease in the province unnecessarily.

THIS, THEN, DEMANDS that we must always be fully in charge of our health in general, and our sexual health in particular. As the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health, we are embarking on a massive awareness campaign to promote the importance of Dual Protection when it comes to sex. This campaign will only work if all of us take responsibility for our action. We are urging all the people of KwaZulu-Natal who are sexually active to ensure that they practice safe sex at all times. Use condoms consistently, correctly, and at all times when engaging in sexual intercourse. We will be visiting institutions of higher learning in various parts of the province, preaching this message. The Government offers FREE condoms, FREE Medical Male Circumcision and FREE contraceptives (such as Implanon - the matchstick size implant which provides 99% protection against pregnancy for three years). We are saying whether you are a circumcised man or a woman on contraceptives, make condoms a non-negotiable. Medical Male Circumcision lessens the chances of HIV and Sexual Transmitted infections (STI's) by 60 percent. And contraceptives only protect against pregnancy. But you can still get HIV or Sexually Transmitted Infections if you do not use protection.

YES, WE HAVE RIGHTS. But let us take responsibility for our lives. Let us do so in honour of all those who died so that we could live in a free country where we have rights.

God bless!

inside



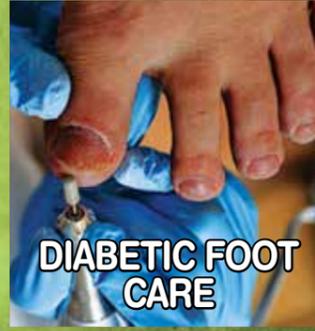
TB AWARENESS



SCHOOL HEALTH



DOWN'S SYNDROME



DIABETIC FOOT CARE

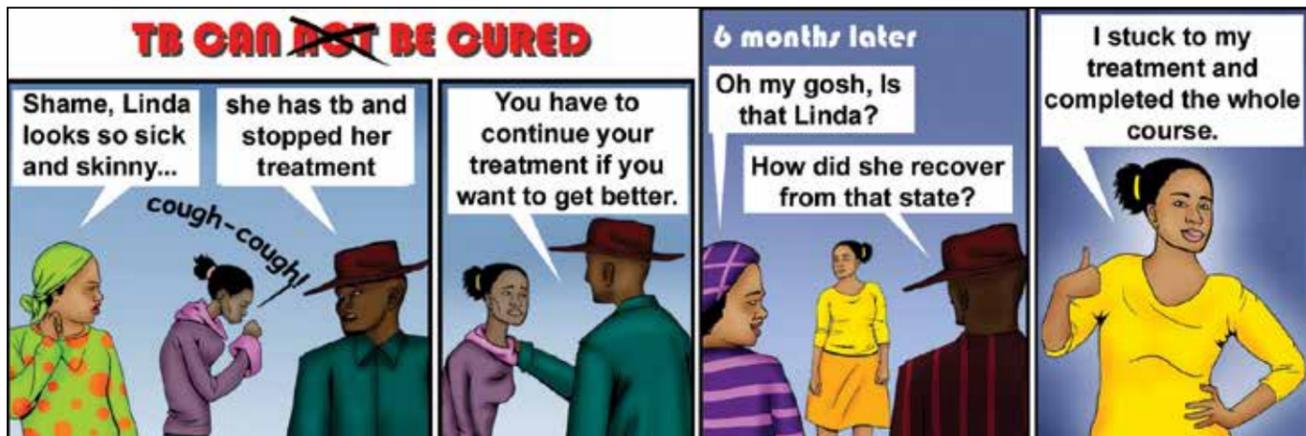
- ... **TB AWARENESS** How to prevent it, how to cure it.
- ... **KZN HEALTH** Latest from your health department
- ... **COMIC** Health education at schools
- ... **SCHOOL HEALTH** Taking health to the classroom
- ... **DOWN'S SYNDROME** Do you know enough?
- ... **IMPROVING HEALTH SERVICES**
MEC Dhlomo calls on health workers to step up
- ... **DIABETIC?**
Get the facts on foot care and avoid amputation
- ... **AWARENESS DAYS** Important days this month
- ... **THROUGH THE KEYHOLE**
A special thank you to a dedicated TB health worker

With thanks to the following contributors:

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Your suggestions and comments are welcome, and if you have been impressed by a health worker who provided an outstanding service, let us know and we will feature them! CONTACT US on 031 562 9803, write to us on PO Box 25439, Gateway 4321 or email editor@ezempilohealthmatters.co.za

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Dealing with TB when you are HIV+

People who have HIV or AIDS are more likely to get TB because their immune systems are low - that is, their bodies are too weak to fight off infections and certain germs that attack the body. Because TB can spread through the air, it means those with the HIV/AIDS virus are more likely to catch the disease. The good news is that TB can still be cured even if you have HIV or AIDS - as long as you complete your TB treatment.

Q Is TB really serious?

Yes, especially if you have HIV. When your immune system is weak, untreated TB infection can quickly turn into TB disease. Without treatment, TB disease can cause you to get very sick or even die. That is why it is very important to get tested and treated for TB. Completing your medicine can save your life.

Q Do all those with HIV get TB disease?

No, but it does mean you have a greater chance of getting TB disease if you have both TB infection and HIV infection. That is why you should get tested asap for TB if you have any of the symptoms.

THE BEST WAY TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF TB IS TO CURE THOSE WHO ARE INFECTED!

We need to unite to fight against TB to prevent the spread. We can do this by:



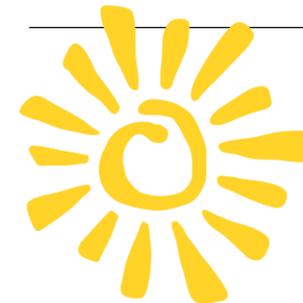
Educating our communities and family on TB, the signs and how it is spread.



Getting tested for TB, and encouraging others to get tested - especially if you are living with someone who has TB.



Allowing fresh air into closed areas - keep windows open, as this reduces the spread of germs



Letting in plenty of sunlight - sunshine helps kill TB germs

Making sure we know who has TB in our area, how they are being treated and when they have been cured.



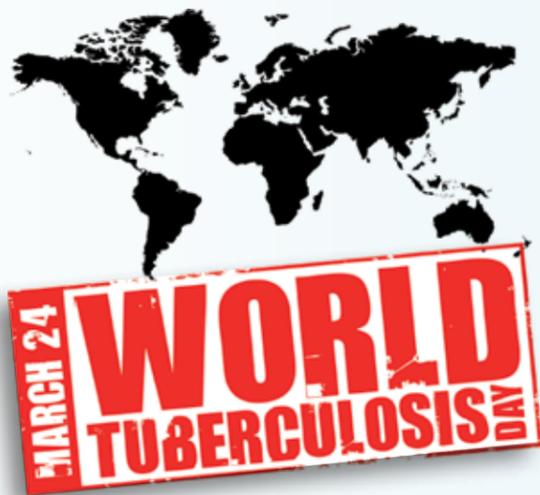
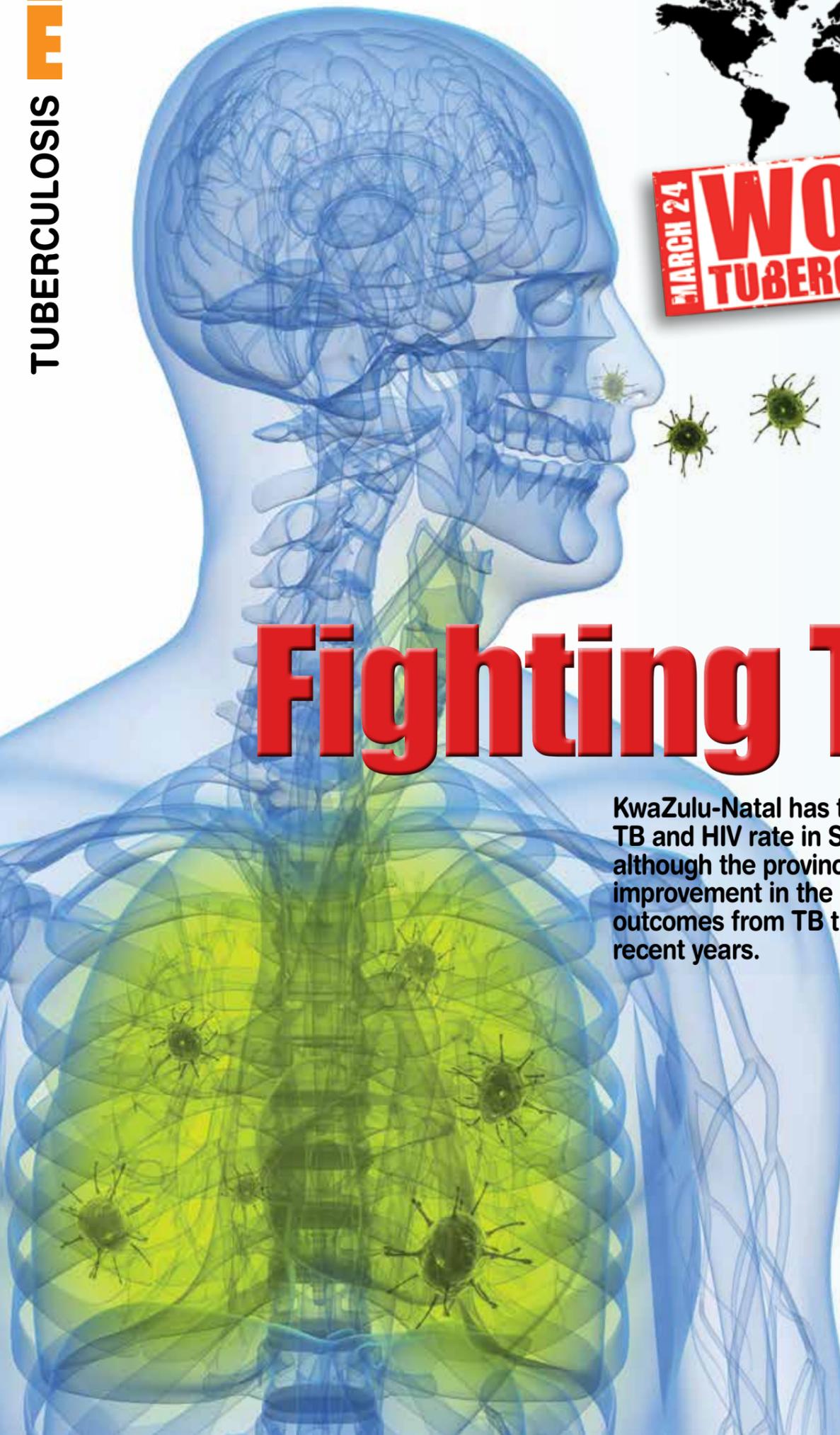
Encouraging TB patients to use DOTS - Directly Observed Treatment, Short-course. These are people (usually a health worker, neighbour, friend or volunteer) who makes sure that a sick person takes the necessary medicine at the right time and ensures there is a record of this.

**TB IS A COMMUNITY PROBLEM
GET TESTED. GET TREATED. GET CURED.**



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Fighting TB

KwaZulu-Natal has the highest TB and HIV rate in South Africa, although the province can claim improvement in the successful outcomes from TB treatment in recent years.

TB IS CURABLE but only if we all play our part, take the medicine correctly, complete the treatment and understand how TB can be spread. During this month, why not use the opportunity of World TB Day to educate others in your community on the disease? Start a health group by getting people in your area together once a week or even once a month to talk about health issues. Use the following guide to get you started on TB...

Q When should I get tested for TB

Get tested at any public clinic or hospital for free if you have any of the following:

- * chest pains
- * lack of appetite
- * unexplained weight loss
- * tiredness
- * night sweats or fever
- * a cough for more than two weeks, or coughing up blood

REMEMBER! If you are HIV positive it is particularly important to get tested.

Q How do I take my medicine?

Take your medicines in the way that your health worker tells you to. If you have more than one medicine, take them at the same time. Medicines are usually taken from Monday to Friday of each week. If your medicines are nearly finished, you can take your green card to any clinic. They will give you more medicines.

Q What happens if I don't get treatment?

You will spread the disease to others and more people will be infected. TB can lead to death if left untreated.

Q Why must I finish my treatment?

If you stop your treatment before your health worker advises you to, you can get TB again. It takes at least six months to 1 year to cure TB. **It is very important to complete the full treatment.**

Q Help with taking your medicine

It's a good idea to get somebody to help you take your medicine. Ask at the clinic about choosing your helper – the person can be a neighbour or a nurse at a clinic. It is important that the person is nearby and easy to get to. Your helper will keep your medicine and give it to you every day and will encourage you to carry on with the treatment when you get tired of it. It is vital to take your medicine everyday – even if you feel better – until your health worker tells you to stop.

Q Can traditional medicine cure TB?

Many people go to traditional healers (sangomas) to help cure their TB. This is fine but it is still important to take your TB medicine from the hospital or clinic even if you go to a sangoma. The TB medicine that your doctor gives you will make sure that you get better from TB.

KZN's TB success rate is now 86.6% - and our defaulter rate has dropped to 3.6% from 24% ten years ago!

FAST FACTS

Over 99,000 people have TB in KwaZulu-Natal, including **6,916 children under the age of five.**

.....
Integrated TB/HIV services are now accessible and available in all 779 public health facilities in KZN – the province's co-infection rate of TB and HIV stands at 65%
.....

The most affected Districts – with more than 1000 cases – are Ugu, eThekweni and uThungulu.

SOCIAL GRANTS

The South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) offers help to people living with HIV or TB under the temporary disability grant and may continue for up to 12 months.

To find out more on how to apply contact SASSA on **031 360 5103**



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KZN HEALTH



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NEWS

Fighting Disease, Fighting Poverty, Giving Hope



GIVE BLOOD, ENCOURAGES DHLOMO

KWAZULU-NATAL HEALTH MEC DR SIBONGISENI DHLOMO has urged South Africans to get into the habit of donating blood, saying that this practice is the right and "Godly" thing to do.

The MEC, who is a regular universal O-blood type donor, donated a pint of blood at a recent drive by the South African National Blood Service (SANBS)'s blood donor centre at Mega City mall in Umlazi, and called on all KZN residents to do the same. The SANBS currently has less than four days supply of blood stocks in KwaZulu-Natal and has joined the MEC in pleading for more people to come forward.

"We often hear of a shortage of blood and that is always concerning because if there's a shortage, then it means you can't access blood from our hospitals. Giving blood is among those good things which we can do. For instance, one pint of blood can help a pregnant woman who has bled too much, or a cancer patient, or someone who may be in an accident. So, it's a gift of life. And it's a great thing because you're giving it to someone you don't even know. And you yourself may need that blood tomorrow. It's a Godly activity that I'd invite all South Africans to think about," said Dr Dhlomo.

200 successful circumcisions in one day



KZN HEALTH MEC, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo participated in the successful circumcision of 200 young men and boys in Nkandla earlier this month, where he encouraged young people to be sexually responsible.

The circumcisions forms part of an Operation Sukuma Sakhe event led by KwaZulu-Natal Premier, Senzo Mchunu, and provincial cabinet members during this month.

Addressing the community, MEC Dhlomo said he would forward a report to the Premier on the challenges faced by the community of Nkandla, including access to birth certificates for children whose mothers do not live with them. This can result in children being denied access to government social grants and when they want IDs they cannot get them.

"We have to help those children," said the MEC, whilst praising the efforts of community members and school health teams for their efforts in youth health awareness.

Teamwork saves man's life on the road

A LIFE SAVING OPERATION at the scene of a road accident recently has been hailed by MEC Dhlomo, with special praise for the efficiency of the surgeon and the team who responded to the urgent call for help.

The accident in Durban left four people injured, one man critically, when the vehicle crashed into a pole, resulting in the pole penetrating the victim's stomach. The Paramedics who arrived at the scene decided to summon the Department of Health's Air Ambulance after realising that it was too dangerous to move the man.

In a dramatic rescue scene, the helicopter landed on the road, which had been closed for traffic. A team of rescuers from KwaZulu Natal Emergency Medical Services, several Private Ambulances as well as Fire Fighters from the eThekweni Metro had realised that extraction without endangering the man's life was not possible.

The helicopter again had to take off to fetch Inkosi Albert Luthuli Hospital trauma surgeon, Dr Mike Faurie, to perform the emergency surgery on the accident victim, before he was airlifted to hospital where a



trauma team was on hand to take over.

"This could not have been possible if not for the team effort of our health practitioners as well as the high level of competence by our surgeon from Inkosi Albert Luthuli Central Hospital. Thanks to them, the man is alive and recovering well in hospital," added Dr Dhlomo.

"This could not have been possible if not for the team effort of our health practitioners..."

HEALTH GIVES WEALTH

So boys and girls, who can tell me what primary health care means?

Yes ma'am, I know, primary health care means to look after just yourself as the first person in the house.

Ma'am, my mother is a nurse and she has taught me that primary health care basic health care, things like flu, colds, caring for a baby or child, things which don't need complicated surgeons or doctors to sort out. Our health system is being changed because we need more professionals who are able to take care of our primary health.

That's excellent Sindi, that is what primary health care is about. But one of the most important things we need to be doing to assist our health system and ourselves is to change our mentality that we can eat whatever we want and live an unhealthy lifestyle because we have hospitals and clinics to go to if we get sick. While our government is introducing primary health care it is our duty to start becoming more responsible with our bodies by focussing on what we can preventative health. Does anyone know what this means?

Yes ma'am, preventative health care means preventing diseases by following good eating and living habits

Well done Sihle, you are right. I'm very impressed you have been paying attention to the nurses who visit our school. Preventative health is the responsibility of each one of us because it means taking action and living a lifestyle which would help prevent diseases. This also includes your sexual health. For example, using a condom if you are sexually active (which I hope none of you are!) and also discussing circumcision with your parents and health worker.

Preventative Health = Good Eating Habits, Healthy Lifestyle, Responsible Sexual Choices.

Yes Jabu...

But ma'am, if we are going to be dealing more with basic health - primary health you call it, won't that mean our doctors will be out of work because they won't be needed any longer?

No Jabu, actually by focussing on primary health care it will actually free up our doctors to deal with patients who need their skills. Primary health can be dealt with by nurses and other community health professionals at community level. Unfortunately what happens is that when we get sick for any reason, most people go to their nearest hospital which is why we have long queues of people waiting to be seen - and most of them don't need to be seen at a hospital. By making sure that we have more people dealing with primary health, this will free up our hospitals to deal with complex cases which is how it should be.

So it means we will need more nurses then, if nurses will also be doing primary health?

Yes, our country will need more nurses and more community health workers.

Yes! That's means more opportunities for nurses and I want to be a nurse one day!

That's good to hear Ruth, you will make a good nurse some day.

PREVENTATIVE HEALTH IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY
HELP MAKE SOUTH AFRICA'S HEALTH BETTER.
A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE MEANS A HEALTHY COUNTRY!



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MARCH 4-8

“A healthy mind develops in a healthy body.”

KwaZulu Natal has 265 Health Promoting Schools and the Department of Health is working harder than ever to try and encourage more schools to reach this status. But it needs YOUR support. A Health Promoting School makes sure that pupils and staff work together with the local community to encourage and practice good health. This way everyone benefits, because you cannot have learners being healthy but then go out into the community or even home where healthy habits are not practiced.



How to achieve Health Promotion status

There are some requirements for a school to be awarded Health Promoting School status by the Department of Health in KZN which include:

- ✓ Striving to improve the health of the school personnel, families and community as well as the learners.
- ✓ Developing its curriculum and life skills programmes to address health needs.
- ✓ Fostering health and learning with all the available resources at its disposal.
- ✓ Engaging all relevant role player and beneficiaries e.g. Health, Welfare, Education officials, NGO's, SGB, community members, parents and community leaders in efforts to make the school a healthy setting.

How children benefit

A Health Promoting School has teams of local nurses conducting regular visits on the health of learners. This means teaching children healthy habits at a young age, including eating the right foods. Many of our province's Health Promoting Schools have vegetable gardens which provide fresh foods not only for the schools but the community too.

Getting started

- ★ Take the initiative! Many people have great ideas but few actually start them. Talk to the school, get in touch with your local clinic and get everyone together to discuss the idea.
- ★ Identify child headed homes in the area and start a vegetable garden in the school which will help to feed vulnerable children especially.
- ★ Speak to local businesses and get them involved in sponsoring items or training. You never know what their response will be, so don't be afraid to ask!



Do you know enough about it?

What is Down's Syndrome?

It's a lifelong disability caused by a defect of the genes (DNA) in the body. It affects the physical and mental functions of a person and usually happens while the baby is still developing in the womb. There is no cure and the cause is still unknown, but there is help for people with Down's Syndrome to live manageable lives.

Who is most affected?

Down's Syndrome is not related to age, race, religion or socio-economic situations. But studies show that 80% of children with the condition are born to mothers under the age of 35. However, it must also be remembered that women over the age of 35 are at a higher risk of having a child with Down's Syndrome.

Screening for Down's

It is possible to check if a baby will be born with the Down's whilst the mother is pregnant. Your health worker or midwife usually picks up signs of this possibility when

doing routine blood checks during your pregnancy – which is why regular checks and visits are important. The health worker will check the expectant mother's blood levels of certain proteins and hormones and will use ultrasound to scan the thickness of a layer of fluid that forms near the neck of a developing foetus. Too much liquid there is often a sign of Down's Syndrome.

Early signs

Babies or children born with the disease usually have the following physical features. It is important to alert your health worker if you notice any of these so that they can make a correct diagnosis and help with health care needed:

- ★ flat facial features
- ★ small head and ears
- ★ short neck
- ★ bulging tongue
- ★ eyes that slant upward

A Down's syndrome baby can be born a normal size. However development is twice as slow – both physically and mentally.

It affects one in every 500 babies born in South Africa, yet little is known about this condition. To ensure more awareness, the following fact sheet will help you and other mothers understand and identify possible signs of Down's Syndrome.

What help is there?

The following are Genetic Clinics which assist with health advice on Down's Syndrome. To attend these clinics, speak to your doctor or clinic as they need to refer you.

- ALBERT LUTHULI HOSPITAL, Durban every Monday
- KING EDWARD HOSPITAL, Durban every Wednesday
- RK KHAN HOSPITAL, Chatsworth..... 4th Tuesday
- MAHATMA GANDHI HOSPITAL, Phoenix 3rd Thursday

For more information on Down's Syndrome, contact: Down's Syndrome South Africa, KZN Outreach Coordinator, **Dudu Sishe**, on **073 123 0373**

IT BEGINS WITH YOU...



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KZN moves towards ideal clinics

KZN Health MEC, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo, has announced a campaign to transform all public sector clinics in the province into ideal clinics, under the theme 'Ideal Clinic Realisation and Maintenance.'

"It's not only about access to good quality care but also about fostering closer relations between our clinics and the communities they serve" – DHLOMO



Key areas which clinics and hospitals need to implement as part of the national core standards in health:

PATIENT RIGHTS	1. Values & attitudes	2. Waiting times	3. Cleanliness
PATIENT SAFETY, CLINICAL GOVERNANCE & CARE	4. Patient safety	5. Infection prevention and control	
CLINICAL SUPPORT SERVICES	6. Availability of medicines and supplies		
PUBLIC HEALTH			
LEADERSHIP & CORPORATE GOVERNANCE			
OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT			
FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE			

What this means

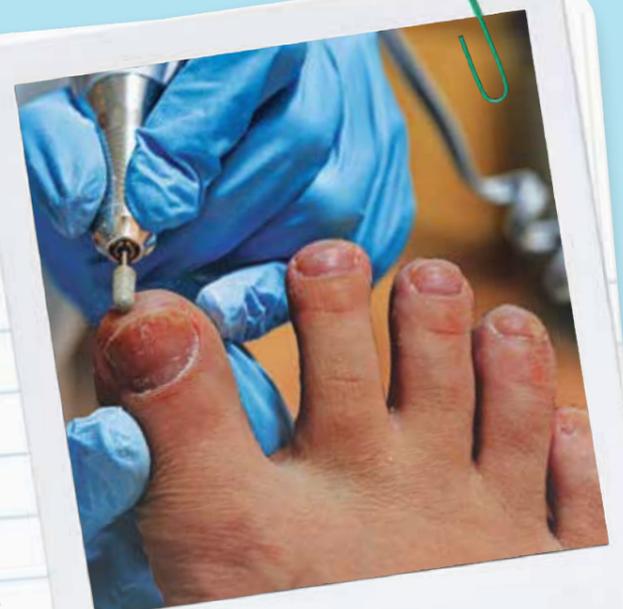
Based on Primary Health Care which began with the Pholela Health Clinic in the 1940s, the Department decided, in line with the National Health Insurance plan, to transform all our clinics so that they become ideal clinics suited to serve the communities in which they are positioned. This means that the clinic must:

- ★ Open on time in the morning and does not close until the last patient has been assisted, even if this is beyond the normal closing hours.
- ★ Be staffed by health care providers who treat people with dignity, and observe the Batho Pele principles of Access, Consultation, Courtesy, Information, Service Standards, Openness and Transparency, Redress and Value for Money.
- ★ Provide community-based health promotion and disease prevention programmes in collaboration with the community.
- ★ Be very clean, promote hygiene and take all precautionary measures to prevent the spread of disease.
- ★ Have reasonable waiting times and community members do not have to sacrifice their entire working day to seek health care.
- ★ Provide a comprehensive package of good quality health services every day and community members do not have to return on different days for different services.
- ★ Have the basic necessities available, such as essential medicines.
- ★ Refer people to higher levels of care timeously when required.
- ★ Work together with the community and relevant stakeholders in promoting health and socio-economic development.

Addressing health professionals and stakeholders from the public sector at a Provincial Consultative Forum recently, MEC Dhlomo called on everyone to put in more effort in making ideal clinics a reality across the province.

"We appreciate and thank all of you for your involvement and support in the achievement of some of our health milestones in this province with the Department of Health doing all that is permissible within its budget constraints to improve the lives of the people. As the MEC for Health I will continue to make it our task to see to it that this entails responsiveness, efficiency, access, safety, patient-centeredness and continuum of care," said Dr Dhlomo.

YOUR GUIDE TO CARING FOR YOUR FEET IF YOU ARE DIABETIC



People with diabetes have a higher risk of developing foot sores or ulcers. In fact, researchers say that every 30 seconds, a limb is lost somewhere in the world because of diabetes. This is why proper foot care is particularly important for people living with diabetes.

Diabetes foot ulcers are often painless because prolonged high blood pressure levels are linked with damage to the nerves in the feet. This means that a person who has a foot ulcer cannot feel pain and may not notice when they have injured a foot. A diabetic foot ulcer can develop even after a minor injury such as stepping on a small stone with bare feet. And the ulcer can easily be infected and take weeks or months to heal.

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health is encouraging those with diabetes to not only take care of their health in managing the disease, but to also care for their feet to prevent foot ulcers and amputation. One of the major causes of foot ulcers is wearing the wrong type of shoes - although many of us often choose shoes based on the look and price and not the comfort or health benefits to our feet! Diabetics need to be especially careful about this.

On caring for your feet as a diabetic, please remember:

DO's:

- ✓ Inspect your feet daily, including areas between the toes
- ✓ Ask a friend or family member to help to inspect your feet if your vision is poor
- ✓ Notify your doctor or nurse at once if you have blister, cut, scratch or sore
- ✓ Wash your feet daily
- ✓ Dry your feet carefully, especially between the toes
- ✓ Test the water temperature with your hand, not your foot
- ✓ Inspect and feel the inside of your shoes daily
- ✓ Moisturise dry or cracked feet daily by using oil or cream
- ✓ Change your socks or stockings every day
- ✓ Clip your nails straight across
- ✓ Ask your doctor or nurse to examine your bare feet

DON'Ts:

- ✗ Do not soak your feet in water or foot spas
- ✗ Do not walk barefoot
- ✗ Do not wear shoes without socks
- ✗ Do not use chemicals or plasters to remove corns or calluses
- ✗ Do not apply moisturising oils or creams between your toes
- ✗ Do not treat your own feet - such as clippings nails - if your vision is poor
- ✗ Do not use hot water bottles and heaters near your feet.



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MARCH



8

International Women's Day

Women continue to face challenges today, despite all the progress made in improving the status of women in our country. One of the biggest problems continues to be the increase in violence against women. This day, which is celebrated around the world to honour the efforts of women who marched for equal rights 101 years ago, calls on women to speak out against violence. MEC Dhlomo has also begun a campaign to tackle rape and abuse of women, and has called on everyone to add their voice to the fight.

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World Kidney Day

Did you know that kidney infection is more common in women? In fact, women are six times more likely to get a kidney infection than men. That's because it's easier for bacteria to enter a woman's body and affect their kidneys. Younger women who have sex often and pregnant women are most at risk. The most important tip to prevent kidney infection is to drink plenty of water!



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World Head Injury Awareness Day

More than 89,000 new brain injuries are reported in South Africa each year, most often due to traffic accidents. This day is dedicated to reminding us all about life saving safety tips on the road. These include wearing a seatbelt and not drinking and driving.



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Human Rights Day

54 years ago on this day, thousands of people took to the streets of Sharpeville, Gauteng, to protest peacefully against Apartheid. The government responded by shooting 69 people dead and injuring 180 others, which led to the day becoming known as The Sharpeville Massacre. Following the election of a democratic government, it was decided that this day will be known as Human Rights Day in honour of all those who sacrificed their lives.



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World TB Day

Today is about building public awareness that TB remains an epidemic around the world. The message is that TB can be cured. Read more in this issue.

MARCH 4-8

School Health Week

School health is all about teaching learners how to prevent diseases so that they can live longer, healthier lives. The Department of Health in KZN runs several health promoting programmes, including a special team which works with schools to create health care awareness. Use this week as an opportunity to introduce healthy foods at home and discuss ways to prevent diseases – after all, it starts at home.



MARCH 8-14

World Glaucoma Week

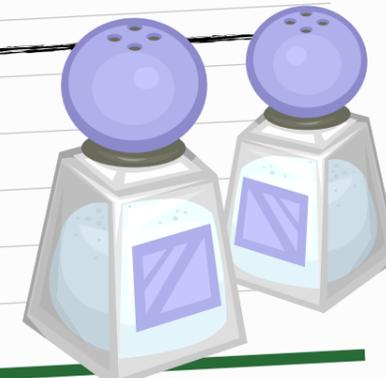
Glaucoma is the second leading cause of blindness in South Africa and this week is used to raise awareness of the issue. Studies show that people who eat the right foods showed an improvement in their glaucoma condition too.



MARCH 16-22

World Salt Awareness Week

South Africans eat too much salt! This also means we will have more people suffering from high blood pressure than ever before. Use this week to start cooking with less salt and see the difference in your family's health! Teach young children to get used to less salty food, as this will encourage healthy eating habits as they grow older.



health

Department:
Health
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Fighting Disease, Fighting Poverty, Giving Hope

Head of the TB Programme in KwaZulu-Natal

Bruce Margot

Head of the TB Programme in KwaZulu-Natal, Bruce Margot retires from the Department of Health this month, after 43 years of service in the public health sector. Ezempilo caught up with him on his journey through the years...



How did your childhood shape your life?

Although I was brought up in the Roman Catholic faith, I am neither religious nor political, but I was guided by the principles from my parents which included:

- ★ Respect and honesty
- ★ Do not mistake education for intelligence
- ★ Accept the responsibility for your decisions
- ★ Nothing is free, you have to work hard for things in life

How did you get started in Health?

I started in the Durban City Health Department as a field hygiene assistant in 1972 and worked my way up the ranks to my current position as Manager of the TB Control programme.

Please describe your journey in the Department and your career?

The journey has been amazing, interesting, rewarding, and humbling as well. KZN is filled with the most amazing people I have ever had the pleasure and privilege of knowing and working with. I have learnt that with team work, anything is possible, and the people of KZN, both community and HCWs, are absolutely indomitable in the face of adversity, and always rise to the occasion when faced with challenges

*Embrace every day,
and always work as a team.*

Words of wisdom to other health professionals?

Remember, working for the DOH is a privilege as you have an opportunity to serve and better the lives of community. At the end of the day, we are all part of the community. The work you do, has meaning, and purpose - never forget that! Embrace every day, and always work as a team. Don't spend all your time in the office and boardroom, make time to keep in touch with the facilities, HCWs on the ground, and community, you will be amazed at what you will learn, it keeps you motivated, and in touch with reality.

What do you plan on doing in your retirement?

We will be having a complete change of pace – my wife and I are moving to the small fishing village of St Helena Bay on the west coast of the Western Cape – no fuss, no traffic, no crowds, not even one robot! I will be doing a lot more walking, hiking and mountain biking. We want to appreciate and travel through our beautiful country, especially the game reserves. I am now an amateur photographer, and my wife does a lot of painting and sketching so we will be relaxing and spending more time with kids and family!



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