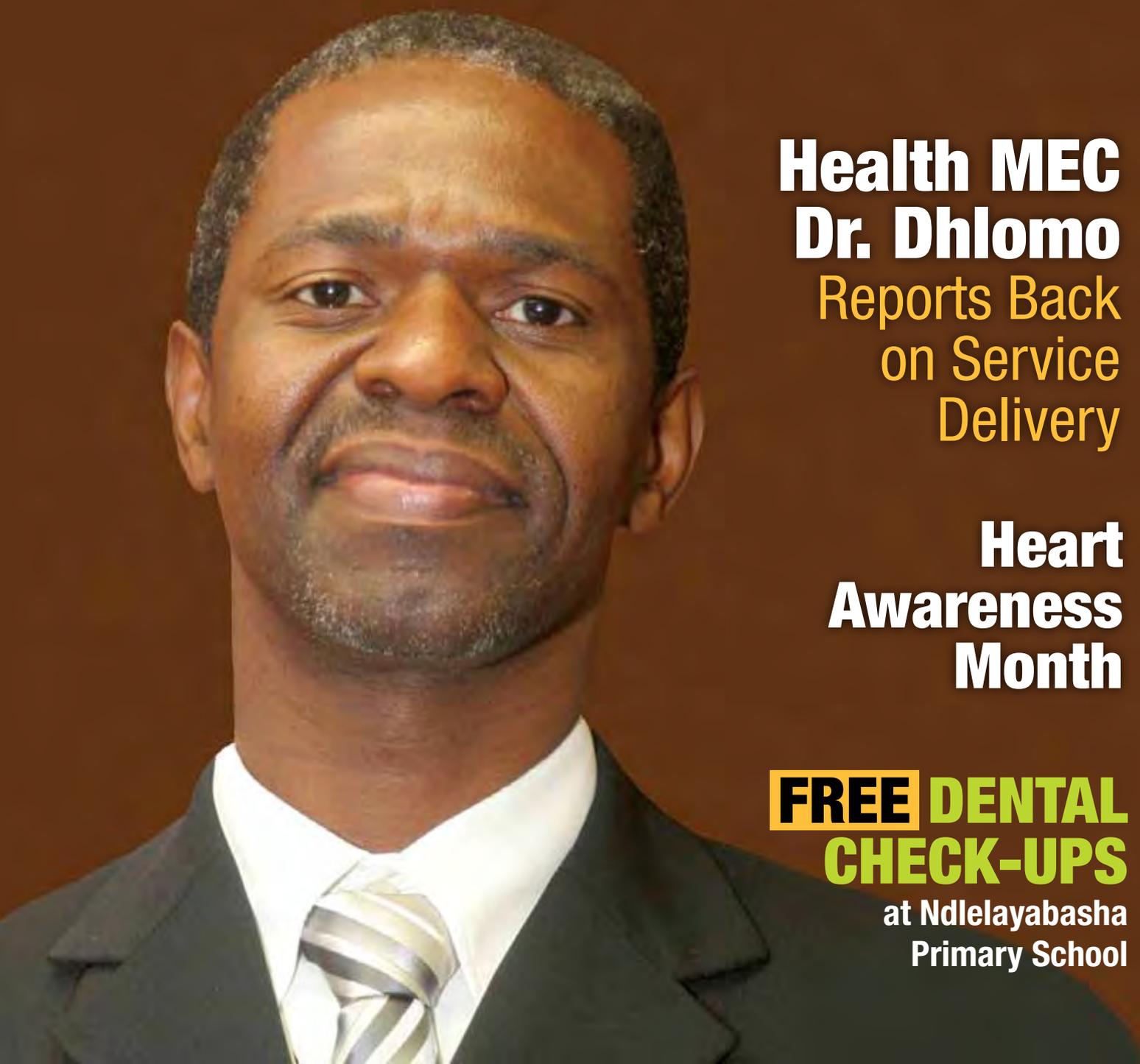


# HEALTH MATTERS **FREE** Ezempilo

EDUCATE || INFORM || EMPOWER EDITION 9



**Health MEC  
Dr. Dhlomo**  
Reports Back  
on Service  
Delivery

**Heart  
Awareness  
Month**

**FREE DENTAL  
CHECK-UPS**  
at Ndlelayabasha  
Primary School



**health**

Department:  
Health  
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL





# Heart Disease Does NOT Discriminate



- ♥ **195 South Africans die every day because of some form of heart and blood vessel disease.**
- ♥ **For every woman that dies of a heart attack, two men die of one.**
- ♥ **Most of those are under 65 years of age, having a major impact on the economy of the country.**

- ✓ **Lowering your cholesterol and having a healthy diet is the best way to reduce your chance of developing heart disease.**
- ✓ **Exercise for at least 120 minutes a week.**
- ✓ **Drink plenty of water.**
- ✓ **Avoid fried and fatty foods.**



## A HEALTHY LIFE BEGINS WITH A HEALTHY HEART



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*Fighting Disease, Fighting Poverty, Giving Hope*

## Message from...



### **KZN Health MEC, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo**

As winter draws to an end, and the new season of spring begins, it is also a time to take stock of our health. September is heart awareness month, and we should all think carefully about what we are doing to ensure the good health of our heart. With changing lifestyles, eating habits are becoming unhealthier, while fried and fast foods are becoming an all too common way of life. Not only are we setting a poor example for the future leaders of this country, but we are setting them up to suffer later on in life, due to unhealthy eating habits.

When we speak about our wellbeing, this includes our lifestyle, eating and body care. As we also celebrate Oral Health Awareness this month, I would like to encourage everyone to go for regular check-ups at your clinic and to take better care of your teeth and gums. Remember that poor care of your teeth can lead to heart disease, diabetes and other health problems, which can be prevented with good oral care.

It has often been said that KZN has the highest level of disease burden, and I am proud to say that we are making gains to turn this around. It is no longer a case of doom and gloom. We have challenges, and we are rising to them, despite all our imperfections. As Women's Month ends, I agree with the general consensus that despite our progress in transformation in the past decade, our health care system has not adequately and entirely achieved its transformational goals. Some of these challenges include inadequate human resources, low retention rates, lack of proper quality management in hospitals and the inability of the system to replace its specialist work force. We are not blinded by our shortcomings. Our health summit, which took place earlier this month was aimed at analysing and coming up with solutions to these and other challenges which are hampering our ability to deliver a quality health service to our people. Through the summit, we will be guided to clearing these obstacles in order to deliver the best health care this province has ever seen and ensure that the first phase of our roll out of the National Health is a success. Our plans are ambitious, and there will be many challenges, critics and opponents along the way. But I would like to ask you to remain as we are, passionate about turning health care around and share in our belief that we will get it right. We owe it to our democracy and to you, the people of KZN, to make this a reality.

# INSIDE

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- COMMUNITY IN ACTION

With thanks from the following contributors:

KZN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY HEALTH UNIT

ZOHRA MOHAMED TEKE (EDITOR)  
COLIWE ZULU  
DERICK MATSENGARWODZI  
THEMBA MNGOMEZULU  
DUDLEY VIALI  
PATRICIA MCCRAKEN  
KATHY WADDINGTON

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, editor@ezempilohealthmatters.co.za or write to us on PO Box 25439, Gateway 4321.

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## HEART DISEASE DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE!



**SEPTEMBER IS HEART AWARENESS MONTH...**



HEART DISEASE IS THE LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH IN SOUTH AFRICA



CHECK YOUR CHOLESTROL, BLOOD PRESSURE AND GLUCOSE LEVELS TODAY



LIVING A HEALTHIER LIFESTYLE TO LIVE LONGER, BETTER!

# September: National Heart Awareness Month

Did you know that heart disease kills one in three men and one in four women in South Africa? Despite the fact that up to 80% of these deaths can be prevented by simply eating and living a healthier lifestyle!

oxygen, making it difficult for you to breathe and so a heart attack occurs. Although a heart attack often happens suddenly, it is often the result of a build-up of fatty deposits in the walls of the arteries over many years.

### What happens after a heart attack?

The injured heart muscle starts to heal immediately after the attack and takes approximately 6 to 8 weeks. For the first few days after being released from hospital, resting is very important - you may find that you are more tired than you expect.

### Can a heart attack be prevented?

**Yes! Simply by watching your lifestyle – follow these tips to reduce your chance of having a heart attack:**

#### Do not smoke

Reduce high blood cholesterol – avoid fried, fatty foods (if you must, grill your chicken instead of frying it).

Reduce your stress levels, relax and sleep well.

Control high blood pressure through regular check-ups and your local clinic or health centre.

Exercise regularly – especially walking, it keeps your heart fit.

Do not drink a lot of alcohol (try to give it up!)

Possible warning signs for a heart attack.

Aim to eat at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables each day – especially avocados, bananas, beetroot, garlic and onions, to help with keeping your heart and blood healthy.

Most of us often take our heart for granted – after all, it's always there, ticking away. But, think about this: your heart is actually a muscle about the size of a fist. It lies in the centre of the chest and its job is to pump about 5 litres of blood every minute. In a day, this adds up to enough to fill a petrol tanker (8000 to 11500 litres)! Considering its tough job, we should be taking better care of our hearts, to ensure they stay healthy. Why not use this month as an opportunity to learn and educate your family and community about the importance of looking after their heart? By doing so, you will be saving more lives.

### What causes a heart attack?

When your arteries (which are like muscular tubes which carry blood from the heart to all parts of the body) become too narrow or a clot forms, it restricts blood flow to the heart. This means that the heart is deprived of

### What to do if someone is having a heart attack

Stay calm – overreacting will put more pressure on the person having the attack, placing him/her in greater danger.

Call an ambulance or get an experienced health worker to perform CPR immediately (this is a method used to keep a person breathing)

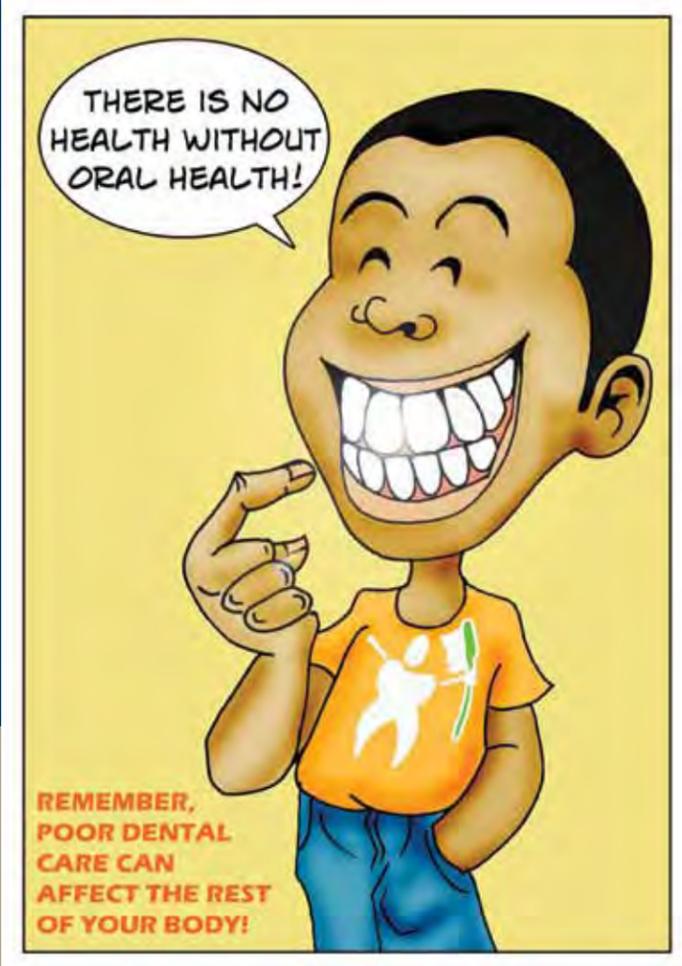
Make sure that the person having the heart attack is sitting or lying down – or ask them to sit up if they are breathless, or lie flat if weak.

Medical help is important in the first few hours of a heart attack – so get help quickly.

Always check with your health worker if you continue to experience any of the following, but remember that each person reacts differently and the problem may not necessarily be heart-related.



# September is Oral Health Awareness Month!



## 9 out of 10 South African children suffer from cavities (holes in their teeth).

This is because they don't take good care of their teeth. Tooth decay is the most common health problem in children and if left untreated, can lead to bigger problems as they get older – like diabetes, heart disease and even oral and stomach cancer. Encourage your family to read the following guide as a way to introduce good oral care to your family:

### Poor teeth care

Mouth infections are common among adults, and can be treated. If you ignore a bleeding gum, it can lead to severe infections, mouth ulcers and spread to the rest of your body. Remember that smoking, chewing tobacco and alcohol use all increase your risk of developing oral cancer, while mouth infections increase the risk of heart disease, diabetes and ulcers.

### How can bad teeth care cause heart disease?

Poor brushing and not caring for your teeth and gums mean that

bad bacteria (germs that can multiply) can travel into your bloodstream from your mouth, down your throat and then deposit themselves in your heart tissue, causing infection and heart disease.

### Take extra care if you're taking HIV/AIDS medication

A dry mouth is common if you are taking HIV/AIDS medication, as there is not enough saliva being formed to wash away the bacteria in your mouth from eating foods and drinking liquids. This can lead to more germs forming. Make sure you use a fluoride toothpaste regularly to prevent this.

### Caring for your teeth during pregnancy

Did you know that a pregnant woman with gum disease is seven times more likely to have a premature baby? That's because pregnant women experience changes in their hormones and their gums become more sensitive to infection, which is why it's important to go for regular

check-ups when you are pregnant, and to eat foods rich in vitamins and calcium to keep your teeth healthy (eggs, meat, beans, dark green vegetables and fruits like oranges).

### KZN Health sets aside R4 million towards upgrading dental equipment!

KZN Department of Health is committed to improving dental health care, and to prove just how seriously it is taking oral health, it has set aside R4 million to upgrade and install new dental equipment and state health facilities in the province, says Dr Jimmy Mthethwa, the Department's Manager of Oral Health Services.

***“Dental diseases are the most common chronic diseases worldwide, affecting children, adults and the elderly, and have a great impact on the wellbeing, daily performance and treatment costs. Tooth decay is largely preventable by simple, proven and effective measures,***

***but despite this, even simple things like daily oral hygiene using toothbrushes are not yet a common practice everywhere and for all. As the KZN Oral Health unit, we would like to drive home the message that oral health is essential to general and overall wellbeing - it is a recognised human right,”*** says Dr Mthethwa.

In addition to the funds being set aside towards dental care, Inkosi Albert Luthuli Central Hospital is also commissioning a Maxillofacial and Oral Surgery service from this month, which will reduce the burden on King Edward VIII, which is currently handling most of the state's oral/facial trauma in KZN. In addition, a Dental Technology Laboratory is also being established, which for the first time, will allow KZN Health to manufacture and provide much-needed dentures (false teeth) for the elderly.

Dr Mthethwa, who has recently started with KZN Health, is passionate about oral health care and says that using toothpaste containing fluoride is the best way to reduce serious oral diseases. “KZN Oral Health strongly recommends that people brush their teeth at least twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, as this prevents tooth decay. We would also like to urge adults to supervise children under the age of six, to make sure that they do not swallow the toothpaste.”

## STOP the formula feeding – save your baby's teeth!

Experts call it Baby Bottle Syndrome, and it's one of the most common dental problems in babies. The signs of this are the rotting of the top four baby teeth, which happens mostly because the baby or child with teeth falls asleep with a bottle of milk, fruit juice or any liquid containing sugar in their mouth. When your baby drinks, the liquid is sucked through the front teeth, allowing plaque bacteria (germs that can multiply) to attack their teeth. To avoid this:

- **Breastfeed your baby – it's healthy and gives baby all the nutrients he/she needs.**
- **Encourage children to brush their teeth regularly – ideally after every meal.**
- **Teach them to avoid or cut down on sweets and sugary drinks – did you know, for example, that a glass of apple juice contains 6 and a half teaspoons of natural sugar in it? Don't be fooled into believing that no sugar added means there is no sugar at all!**
- **Do not add sugar to any liquid – teach your child (and yourself) to have tea without sugar.**
- **Go for regular check-ups on your teeth for you and baby.**
- **Treat mouth infections or gum diseases immediately by speaking to your health worker to prevent further health risks from developing.**

**Take care of your teeth – it could save your life.**



**TAKE CARE OF YOUR TEETH TO PREVENT HEART DISEASE – REMEMBER, THERE IS NO HEALTH WITHOUT ORAL HEALTH!**

**Dr Jimmy Mthethwa, Manager of Oral Health Services for KZN Dept of Health.**

## FREE DENTAL SCREENING!

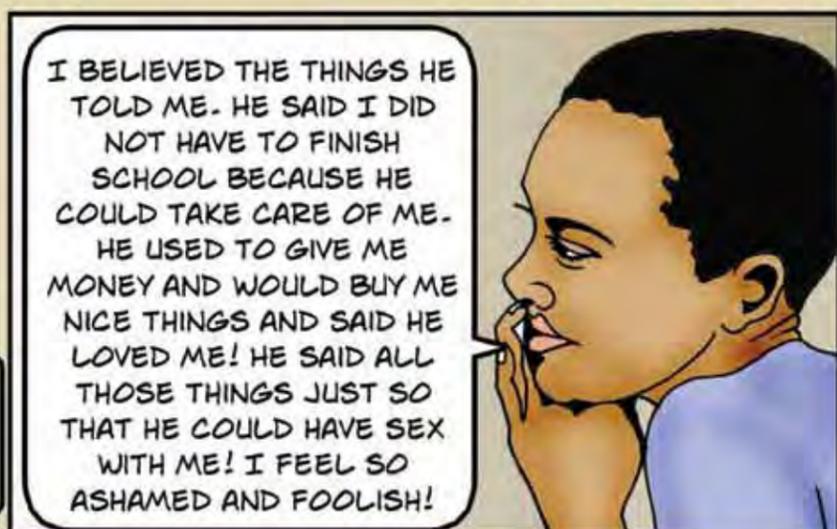
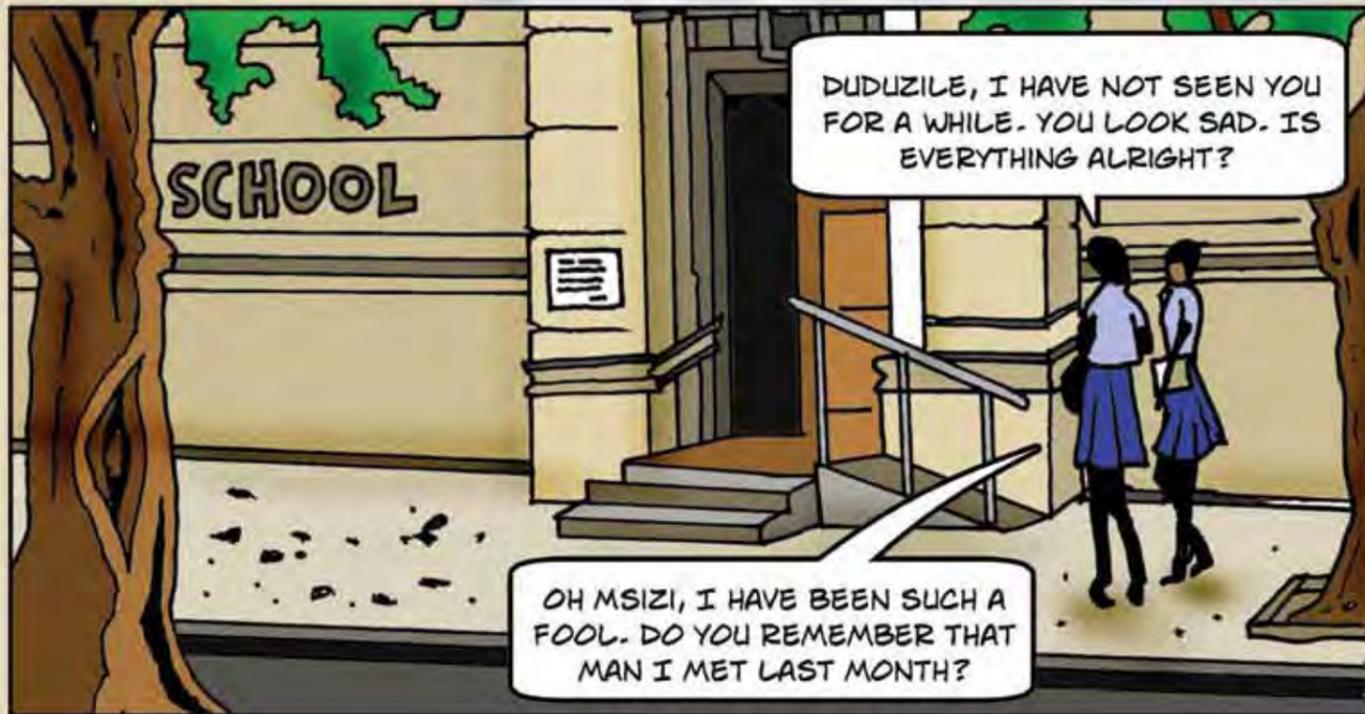
**ORAL HYGIENISTS FROM KZN HEALTH HAVE PARTNERED WITH COLGATE TO PROVIDE FREE DENTAL CHECK-UPS FOR 250 SCHOOL CHILDREN AT NDLELAYABASHA PRIMARY SCHOOL IN WILLOWFONTEIN, PMB.**

**DATE OF SCREENING: 19 SEPTEMBER 2011**

**TIME: 09:00 AM TO 12:30 PM**

# TEENAGE PREGNANCY

## STAY IN SCHOOL, SAY NO TO SUGAR DADDIES!



**FOR HELP OR ADVICE, CALL KZN HEALTH TOLL FREE ON 0800 005133.**

# September – Albinism Awareness Month:

## Educate, don't discriminate!

Siyabonga Radebe was born with Albinism, and explains just how society's lack of knowledge about his condition has affected his life. It's a sad story of how people allow their own beliefs to ruin the lives of others, and during this month, we provide information so that people can understand that Albinism is not a curse; it's a condition requiring understanding and support.

### Siyabonga's story

"When I was born, my family and the community said that my mother had had an affair with a white man, which was why I was born white. They did not understand or believe in Albinism. My family was seen as a curse, and my father left us the day I was born. I have not seen him since," says Siyabonga.

### Social isolation

His mother was his only strength

and source of support, and she took him wherever she went because no one wanted to touch him. When he started school, the discrimination began to get worse because he was always alone. "Parents told their children not to play or talk to the 'little white witch' because they did not understand Albinism. As the year's passed, I became lonely, and my health suffered too," he adds. Today, Siyabonga copes with his condition and supports himself with a regular job – but it has not been easy because of the false beliefs about his condition.

### Albinism is not a curse

Health worker Thabo Gwala says people need to know that Albinism cannot be passed on and is not to be feared. "People with Albinism need help and understanding from the community. They are normal people, they are not cursed and they are not possessed by any witchcraft", says Thabo.

### Health issues affecting those with Albinism

Those with Albinism suffer from poor eyesight and need to avoid the sun's heat because of the lack of colouring in their skin. They must wear sun hats when they are outdoors to avoid skin cancer and need to wear glasses to help with their eyesight.

### Albinism Fast Facts:

Albinism is an inherited condition caused by the lack of skin colour called 'melanin'.

It does not affect a person's intelligence.

Albinism can cause problems with eyesight.

People with Albinism are very sensitive to strong light.

You do not need to avoid someone with Albinism, they are not cursed.

## The monthly guide:

# Urine Infections in Women

Millions of women in South Africa suffer from an infection of their urine system. This is because germs can easily enter a woman's body, from her urine tube into their bladder (the part of the body that empties urine from the body). Many of these infections are more serious than we think, which is why it's important to know the signs and get treatment at your clinic as soon as possible, especially if you are pregnant, as the infection can lead to a premature baby and high blood pressure. A bladder infection is the most common and can easily be treated. A kidney infection is very serious and can lead to permanent damage and even death. Keep the following guide to help you monitor any signs of an infection in your bladder or kidney:

**Germs often enter a woman's body or start to multiply when she:**

### Has sex

That's because germs are pushed up into a woman's body – this is the most common cause of a bladder infection in a woman. To prevent this, make sure you go to the toilet after sex (this washes out the urine tube, but does not prevent pregnancy)

### Drinks little water

When a woman works outside in hot weather, sweats a lot and drinks little water, germs start to multiply in the empty bladder. Try to drink at least 8 glasses of water every day or more if you work in hot weather.

### Lack of cleanliness in the private area

Wash the private area every day, and always wipe from front to back – this is because wiping back to front can spread germs from the back to the urine opening, where germs can enter the body.

### Signs of a Bladder Infection:

- Need to go to the toilet often (or you may feel that there is still urine in your body after going to the toilet)
- Pain or burning feeling while passing urine
- Pain in the lower stomach just after passing urine
- Bad smell from the urine, or urine that looks cloudy or bloody (dark colour urine can also be a sign of a sexually transmitted infection)



### Signs of a Kidney Infection:

- Fever and feeling cold
- Lower back pain or side
- Nausea or vomiting
- Feeling sick and weak

### IMPORTANT!

**VISIT YOUR NEAREST CLINIC FOR TREATMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SO THAT THE INFECTION DOES NOT GET WORSE AND REMEMBER TO START TAKING YOUR MEDICINE RIGHT AWAY IN THE CORRECT DOSAGE!**



# KZN HEALTH NEWS



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# NEWS

*Fighting Disease, Fighting Poverty, Giving Hope*

## NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE - How will it affect you?

You may have heard about it, or read it somewhere, but know little else about how it will benefit you. It's simple. The government is introducing a new health system, called the National Health Insurance (known as NHI in short), which will completely change the way health care is provided. It will guarantee that health care is free, accessible and that those who need it the most receive priority. What's more, it will lead to better quality of care with a focus on preventing diseases – not just curing them. As the province with the most diseases, KZN stands to benefit the most from this approach, as it will bring real hope to turn the tide and reduce the high number of diseases in this province. The first pilot phase begins next April, with the plan being in full swing by 2025 – to give government time to get the funding, resources, staff and infrastructure needed to make sure the plan is a success. It is exciting news, and we should all get out there and spread the word in our communities because it needs all our efforts and support to work.

### Why do we need National Health Insurance?

Health care is a human right. This right should not depend on how rich



**MRS NONHLANHLA MAKHANYA HEAD OF MINISTRY IN THE OFFICE OF THE MEC FOR HEALTH IN KZN, DR SFISO MTSHALI FROM INKOSI ALBERT LUTHULI HOSPITAL, HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH DR SIBONGILE ZUNGU AND PROFESSOR RACHEL GUMBI CEO OF PRINCE MSHIYENI MEMORIAL HOSPITAL AT THE PROVINCIAL HEALTH SUMMIT HELD IN DURBAN THIS MONTH.**

we are, whether we can afford health care or where we live. The right to health care is in our Constitution. But large numbers of our people continue to die prematurely and to suffer unnecessarily from poor health. Treatable conditions are not being treated on time and preventable diseases are not being prevented. Private health serves 16% of the population, but receives half of the spending on health in the country – while our public health serves 84%

of our people, yet receives the same spending. That is unacceptable, which is why we need a new health plan that will ensure all people receive equal access to quality health care.

### Will you pay for the NHI?

The NHI will be mainly funded in three ways: government funds (through tax), employer's contributions, and a deduction from the salaries of people who earn above R60,000 per year.

### Will the unemployed be able to get free health care under the NHI?

Yes. The NHI is aimed at providing equal health care to all South Africans and registered citizens. If you are unemployed, a student, or earning less than R60,000 you will still be able to receive free medical care. Those who are not registered South Africans and tourists will not be able to access free medical care under the NHI, but can still receive care in an emergency.

### I heard the NHI will mean we pay more taxes, is it true?

The fact of the matter is that 95% of the funding for the NHI is already there. Government needs to find a way to raise the remaining 5%, and this will not be done by taxing people more. Other ways of raising more money are being looked at, but the NHI will not place a burden on people's income. If anything, it will

make it easier because the NHI will become the single, largest funder of health care in the country!

### How will it benefit pregnant women and children?

Under the new plan, women, children, the elderly and the youth will receive priority care. There will be reduced waiting times, more resources, better qualified staff and most importantly, government will monitor the performance of health staff to make sure that you are getting the quality of service expected.

### But there are not enough doctors, how will the plan address this?

Our country is mainly curative in health care. This means that we spend more time and money curing people than preventing the diseases. Under the NHI, the focus will shift to prevention, so that people are more aware of what makes them sick and how to prevent this. For this to work,

more Primary Health Care centres, nurses, community care workers and doctors will be needed. That's why the plan is being given 14 years to be fully implemented. The ball is already rolling. KZN Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo has begun auditing all health facilities in KZN to make sure that those that do not meet the standards required are overhauled. Clean health facilities and a health service that treats patients with respect and care is not too much to ask – and that's what the NHI hopes to deliver!

**'A preventive health scheme shall be run by the state; free medical care and hospitalisation shall be provided for all, with special care for mothers and young children'**

**– Freedom Charter on Health, adopted by the Congress of the People, June 26, 1955. It's time to make it happen!**



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## IMPORTANT CONTACT NUMBERS

**EMRS 10177**

**KZN HEALTH TOLL FREE,  
24 HOURS A DAY  
0800 00 51 33**

**POLICE 10111**

DISTRICT HEALTH OFFICERS	
AMAJUBE	034 328 7000
ETHEKWINI	031 240 5300
ILEMBE	032 437 3500
SISONKE	039 834 8310
UGU	039 688 3000
UMUGUNGUNDOVU	033 897 1000
UMKHANYAKUDE	035 572 1327
UMZINYATHI	034 2999100
UTHUKELA	036 631 2202
UTHUNGULU	035 787 0631
ZULULAND	035 874 2302

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# KZN HEALTH NEWS



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*Fighting Disease, Fighting Poverty, Giving Hope*

## KZN HEALTH MEC DR DHLOMO REPORTS ON HEALTH CARE DELIVERY

Earlier this month, KZN Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo gave feedback on the progress of service delivery in KZN health so far. The following lists just some of these achievements:

### Decreasing Maternal and Child Mortality

KZN Health has introduced 12 specialised ambulances (one in each district) that are equipped to deal with maternity and neonatal care to ensure pregnant women are able to travel to health facilities for care especially during delivery. More such ambulances will be introduced next year, along with the training of more community midwives. Up to 79.3% of pregnant women are on highly active antiretroviral treatment (HAART). However, MEC Dhlomo has urged pregnant women to register their pregnancies as early as possible. "The biggest challenge around HAART is late booking by patients. Many women still hide their pregnancies or visit their clinics too late into their pregnancies. This delays their access to life-saving interventions," says Dhlomo.

### Breast is best – KZN leads the way!

The National Department of Health has successfully launched the Infant and Young Child Feeding policy to promote and support breastfeeding.

To date, 76% of KZN hospitals have been accredited as Baby Friendly, while the KZN Department of Health has been commended in the Breastfeeding Summit for being the first and only province to stop infant formula feeds since January 2011!

### Nutrition & Physical Activity [NAP]

NAP is being rolled out in all Districts in partnership with the Department of Education. A healthy lifestyle among the elderly is also being promoted through declaring Wednesdays "Golden Wednesdays." The aim is to:

- Reduce the burden of diseases amongst the elderly
- Improve their quality of life
- Add life and energy to their lifestyle

### Fraud and Corruption

MEC Dhlomo, together with his HOD, Dr Sibongile Zungu has made one thing very clear. There will be a zero tolerance for fraud and corruption within the department. Their words have not just been hot air – they have walked the walk to ensure that those within their ranks found guilty of corruption are dealt with in a tough but fair manner. The following is a breakdown of all cases:

Status	No. of Cases
Charged & dismissed	17
Charged and resigned	13
Pending before Court	1
Suspension pending disciplinary hearing	28
Charged and issued with written warning	14
Found not guilty and charge withdrawn	5
Hearing in progress	29
Referred to SAPS/HAWKS	17

Total amount recovered to date:  
R 1 720 000

### Heed the call, get tested and treated for TB

Around 2 920 433 citizens in KZN have been tested for HIV so far. Of these, 19% tested positive and were referred for appropriate care, while 90% of HIV positive patients were screened for TB. Together with a campaign and the use of a new machine called Gene Expert, which tests for TB in a few hours, the department has:

- Followed up 3178 Smear positive TB cases in eThekweni, visiting 3004 homes and screening 5472 household contacts.
- Three Gene Expert machines currently in eThekweni with an additional 14 being introduced within three months.
- Two machines to be introduced in

Uthungulu District and five in the Sisonke District.

### Child Health and Nutrition

Home visits by community health workers in the first weeks of a baby's life reduces baby deaths by 60%. With this in mind, the Department together with UNICEF has begun training all Community Care Givers to provide effective home-based care to newborns and their mothers. Community Care Givers will now also be able to hand out oral rehydration solutions and vitamin A.

### Living a healthy lifestyle to live longer!

The lack of exercise is reportedly one of the main factors of death from non-communicable diseases (like cancer, diabetes, heart and lung disease). As a Department, KZN Health has increased its programs to make more people aware of diseases, prevention and the need to exercise. The message is simple: get more exercise – run, walk, jump, just do it!

### Strengthening Primary Health Care

R19 million has been set aside for the piloting of six Family Health Teams. Each ward will be allocated a team led by a professional nurse, three enrolled nurses and several Community Care Givers. They will promote and advise on the prevention of diseases at community level. A further R39 million has also been allocated towards school health services.

### Oral Health

A new Maxillo-facial centre will be commissioned at Inkosi Albert Luthuli Central Hospital this month. The Department is also engaging private specialists to provide services at Newcastle, Grey's, Port Shepstone, and Ngwelezane hospitals. In addition, R3.9 million has been approved for the upgrading of dental

equipment across KZN's state health facilities.

### Infrastructure Development

The Department has opened 23 new clinics across 11 districts and is embarking on a new 500 bed project for Dr Pixley ka Seme Regional Hospital at a cost of around R2 billion. This will provide jobs and training opportunities to the communities of KwaMashu, Inanda and Phoenix.

### Medical Male Circumcision

The Medical Male Circumcision campaign was implemented in KZN in April 2010. The following table outlines the progress so far:

DISTRICTS	15-49 YRS	50 YRS	4 MTHS – 14 YRS	0-3 MONTHS	TOTAL
Amajuba	4 405	32	629	6	5 072
eThekweni	11 092	75	694	44	11 905
iLembe	961	55	164	4	1 184
Sisonke	1 264	3	46	1	1 314
UGu	2 185	53	267	2	2 507
uMgungundlovu	12 401	119	714	2	13 236
UMkhanyakude	3 633	22	292	1	3 948
UMzinyathi	4 401	19	405	3	4 828
UThukela	1 888	28	158	3	2 077
Uthungulu	4 744	94	268	3	5 109
Zululand	3 254	16	235	4	3 509

### Emergency Medical Services

Emergency Services has purchased 274 ambulances for the Province to improve on response times and service delivery. Twenty-five seater busses have also been allocated to transport MDR & XDR patients to King George V Hospital and other hospitals dedicated to treating TB patients.

**The wheels of change are in motion, and there is no stopping the journey until better health for all is delivered!**



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# KZN HEALTH



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## KZN Health forms Provincial Health Council – making health better!

### What's It All About?

Of all the social challenges facing our country, health care is the most serious. After all, a healthy nation means that more people are able to work, feed their families, help grow the country's economy. With this in mind, KZN Health formed a Provincial Health Council recently, in line with National Health requirements. The Council will assist in transforming our health system so that it can deliver quality health care to all South Africans.

### What Will The Council Do?

The Council will advise the MEC on health issues, including:

- Policy matters that will protect, promote and improve the health of the KZN population;
- Proposed laws relating to health matters;
- Norms and standards for health establishments;
- Guidelines for the management of health districts;
- The implementation of National and Provincial health policy.

### MEC WELCOMES PHC

KZN Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo called the Council a "major step" and said that it would lead to

a long and healthy life for all South Africans. However, MEC Dhlomo was also honest and realistic about the challenges facing health care delivery in KZN. "Health care is a system, and like any other system, all the parts must function together to be effective. Of course, we need more resources



and as government, we are looking for ways of doing more with what we have. The launch of the Council is part of our effort to find ways of focusing the energies of communities, non-governmental organisations and all levels of government towards a common goal. The Council will need to impact on policy and programmes in an environment where much of the ill health, disease, premature death,

and suffering on a large scale are unnecessary, when interventions are available for prevention and treatment," said Dr Dhlomo.

### How Will It Benefit You?

Simply put, it will allow the Health Department to find solutions to problems so that it can improve health care. The Council will work with the MEC to try and resolve issues that are preventing health care from working effectively. The idea is that while there is not a tap of unlimited money to solve all the problems, as a nation we need to become more resourceful in how we use what we have, so that people's lives can be saved, rather than lost while we wait for more resources to become available.

### Who Sits On The Council?

The Council is appointed by MEC Dr Dhlomo and includes his Head of Department, Dr Sibongile Zungu, one councillor each from the District Municipalities and other representatives from the health sector, all of whom will serve on the Council for a period of five years. The MEC chairs the Council. The Council is also allowed to consult with and receive representations from any person or organisation – in the true spirit of making it a people's Council!

# SEPTEMBER: Awareness Days



### National Heart Awareness Month

Did you know that one in three men and one in four women suffer from heart disease in South Africa? Heart Awareness is to encourage a healthy lifestyle for a healthy heart – what you put into your body is what you get out of it!

### National Oral Health Month

The theme for this month's Oral Health Awareness is 'No Health Without Oral Health'. Many of us do not realise that regular brushing of our teeth can prevent diabetes, heart problems and many other diseases. Let's use this month to spread the word on good dental care and save lives.

### Albinism Awareness Month

Albinism is not a curse, and this month is a reminder to us all to show tolerance, understanding and respect for sufferers of Albinism. They are part of society and should not be judged because of their condition.

### Muscular Dystrophy Awareness Month

This is a condition which weakens the muscles in the body, and affects one in 1200 people in South Africa. Symptoms include muscle weakness and tiredness.

### Eye Care Awareness Month

Seventy-five percent of blindness can be avoided through prevention or treatment, and that is why it is so

important to get your eyes tested at least once per year. During this month encourage your community to have their eyes checked too.

### Deaf Awareness Month

There are five million deaf and hard of hearing people living in South Africa, and this month is used to educate people on how the deaf communicate. Learn sign language and support the deaf in your area – it shows you care!

### Kidney Awareness Week: 6-11

Kidney Awareness Week is to make people aware of the prevention and treatment of kidney problems. In many cases kidney disease is linked to hypertension, diabetes and obesity. KZN Health would also like to remind people that it is illegal to sell body parts. Some doctors in the private health sector have been caught for doing this – do not allow anyone to try and convince you to sell your kidney or any other part of your body.

### Pharmacy Week: 5-11

This week is in recognition of the value of pharmacists in ensuring the safe and effective use of medicines, and the important role they play as professionals in the health care team.

### Back Week: 5-11

Did you know that back pain is the second most common reason (after

the cold) for people to stay away from work? Back Awareness Week is about informing people of the problems of back pain, as well as causes and prevention.

### World Rabies Day: 08

Rabies can lead to death, and so it is important to remember that all dogs must be vaccinated against this disease. The National Council of SPCAs has appealed to manufacturers of anti-Rabies vaccines for donations of the product, so that human lives can be saved from the deadly bite of an animal with rabies.

### Intl Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Day: 09

Alcohol during pregnancy can be deadly for an unborn child. Pregnant women are encouraged to stop drinking to save the life of their baby. This day is dedicated to raising awareness about this.

### Stroke Week: 12-16

Around 60 people die every day in our country as a result of strokes. The message during this awareness week is that a stroke doesn't have to be a death sentence. Knowing the signs of a stroke and seeking immediate medical help can improve the outcome.

# SEPTEMBER: Awareness Days



## Bone Marrow Donor Awareness: 13

Thousands of South Africans are diagnosed each year with life-threatening blood conditions and for many, a bone marrow transplant from a healthy donor is the only possible life-saving treatment option. This day is dedicated to encouraging people to come forward to help others by registering to become a donor. Speak to your health worker about this.

## ADHD Day: 14

ADHD is a condition which interferes with a person's ability to control their behaviour and concentrate on tasks in a proper way. If you feel your child is overactive, cannot sit still and is not

following instructions properly, seek medical help on whether it could be ADHD.

## Victim Rights Day: 15-19

This week is aimed at providing information by Government Departments on what services and interventions are offered to victims of crime. The Victims Right Charter includes:

- The right to be treated with fairness and with respect for your dignity
- The right to offer information
- The right to receive information
- The right to protection
- The right to assistance
- The right to compensation

## World Retina Week: 18-24

The aim of this week is to

encourage all people, especially the elderly to have their eyes checked to avoid severe vision loss. Prevention is better than cure!

## World Alzheimer's Day: 21

Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia, which is a name for a number of conditions which affect the memory of the brain. Symptoms include loss of memory, difficulty in finding the right words or understanding what people are saying, difficulty in performing previously routine tasks and personality and mood changes. There is currently no cure, so we should encourage all people to show understanding, patience and tolerance for people with Alzheimer's.

# September 8: World Rabies Day

All you need to know



## What Is Rabies?

It's a virus (a germ) which comes from the bite of a rabid or 'mad' animal – usually a dog, although other animals can also spread this

virus. It affects the brain and can lead to death within a few days if not treated immediately. In South Africa, around 30 people die each year from rabies – most of them children under the age of 15. That is why it's

important to understand how the bites of animals - especially stray ones - can affect humans, so that everyone in the community is aware of the dangers of being bitten by an animal.

## How can you tell if an animal is rabid?

- It acts strangely – sometimes sad, restless or irritable
- Foams at the mouth, or cannot eat or drink
- The animal goes 'wild' – and tries to bite anyone or anything

## Signs of rabies in people after being bitten by an animal

- Pain and tingling near the bite
- Difficulty in breathing
- Pain when swallowing, with thick saliva
- Fits of anger
- As the person nears death, he starts to get into a state of fit, and may become paralysed

## Treatment

Clean the bite well with soap and water and go to your nearest health centre immediately for treatment. Do not close the wound, leave it open.

## How to prevent rabies in the community

- Report any animal you suspect of having rabies, and arrange with your local council to get rid of the animal
- Keep children away from any animal that seems sick or acts strangely
- Teach children to stay away from stray animals
- Speak to a local animal doctor about vaccinating dogs in your community to reduce the risk of rabies



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# COMMUNITY in action



◀ Walk to delivering health care!

▼ Health HOD Dr Zungu launches action for promoting women's equality

▼ MEC Dhlomo and eThekweni mayor James Nxumalo with the Free State Cabinet on a visit to Inkosi Albert Luthuli Central Hospital



MEC Dhlomo with the Department's General Manager of Corporate Governance Prash Padayachee and Rev Siphon Mtetwa during the inauguration of the KZN's Provincial Health Council ▶

