



# DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

## CORPORATE COMMUNICATION SERVICES

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## **MDR TB CASES IN TUGELA FERRY NOT AN OUTBREAK BUT REFLECTION OF POVERTY AND HUNGER INTENSITY**

The department of health in KwaZulu-Natal is aware of that there is a challenge of MDR TB. The MEC for Health Neliswa Peggy Nkonyeni is aware of the 225 cases of MDR TB for the period of January 2005 to January 2006 in the uMsinga Area.

UMsinga is in the uMzinyathi District one of the three poorest districts in the province. It is a known fact that TB is associated with poor socio-economic conditions. MDR TB is due to poor adherence to TB treatment. TB treatment is of 6 months duration which results in poor compliance. This is compounded by the fact that due to high level of poverty often patients have to take medication on an empty stomach which is an unpleasant experience. As a result they refrain from taking the medication –making the development of MDR TB a serious threat.

Both moral and nutritional supports are key in addressing the threat of MDR TB, and the department is addressing this.

### **INTERVENTIONS**

Following the findings at the Church of Scotland Hospital (COSH) in Tugela Ferry the department has set up the following:-

- Tracing & screening of all MDR TB contacts.
- Active MDR case finding.
- TB Culture & Sensitivity specimens are sent daily to Inkosi Albert Luthuli Central Hospital for spoligotyping
- MDR positive patients are isolated from other patients.
- Ventilation in wards is improved.
- COSH is in a process of installing extractor fans in TB ward.
- MDR training for doctors conducted on 2005/06/02.
- TB tracing teams increased from 1 to 4 teams.



- The Umzinyathi District has identified Greytown hospital to admit stabilized MDR patients referred back from King George.

The above measures will be accelerated and TB awareness campaigns shall be strengthened at all levels of communities.

ENDS

**Issued 28/03/2006 by:- Leon Mbangwa, spokesperson of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health. For further information: 033 395 2276, Cell 083 459 8695, Fax 033 342 0429 Email [mbangwal@dohho.kzntl.gov.za](mailto:mbangwal@dohho.kzntl.gov.za)**