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It was all glitter and glamour on the International Nurses Day commemoration held at uMzimkhulu in the Sisonke Health District recently.

This event is globally commemorated in the month of May in remembrance of the heroics of nursing profession pioneer Florence Nightingale.

This year's event was jointly organized by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health and nurses' organization DENOSA..

Ms Peggy Nkonyeni, MEC for Health in KwaZulu-Natal thanked the nurses for the role they play in delivering health services to different communities in the country.

She also pointed out that the government fully understands



**Top: MEC for Health in KwaZulu-Natal, Ms Peggy Nkonyeni lights a candle in remembrance of Florence Nightingale who was also known as "The Lady with the Lamp"**

the difficult conditions that nurses work under and it is doing its best to improve the situation.

The DENOSA Deputy General-Secretary,

Mr David Makhombe, delivered a report on the programmes that his organization has in place to improve the plight of nursing profession.

**PHOLELA CHC COMES SCOOPS TOP AT PREMIER'S AWARDS**

Pholela Community Health Centre in Bulwer once again raised the Sisonke Health District flag by clinching the second space under Health section in the Batho Pele Principles Premier Awards event.

In this annual event all government departments are invited to participate and the departmental winners compete in the interdepartmental contest. Departments are judged on their Batho Pele service delivery improvement plans

Pholela Community Health Centre success is rare given that it's the first among CHCs and it beat bigger institutions with better financial, human and material resources.

**WORLD ENVIRONMENTAL DAY AN EYE-OPENER AT HIMEVILLE**

The World Environmental Day was held with great enthusiasm at the Himeville Community Hall in Kwa-Sani Municipality recently.

This event was a collaborative venture between Sisonke Health District, Department of Agriculture and Environmental Affairs, Sisonke District Municipality and KwaSani Local Municipality.

The International Environmental Day is celebrated on the 5<sup>th</sup> June annually to educate the global community on the importance of nature in our lives. This is inline

with the resolutions of the Stockholm Conference in 1972 where environment versus economic development issues were discussed.

The major challenge that is facing the environment today is the ever increasing global warming due to green gas omissions from various sources such as industries, motor vehicles, etc.

This year's theme was, " All hands on deck for a lower carbon economy".

Presentations on various environmental topics were made.



**Drakensberg Mountains in Sisonke District is a World Heritage Sight and one of the leading nature reserves in the whole world**

**LAUNCH OF THE PRE & ART PILOT REGISTER PROCESS**

The PRE & ART Pilot Register Process was officially launched by the Department of Health and the University of Western Cape. This project which is aimed at improving the quality of gathering information of HIV/AIDS patients was initiated after the survey that indicated the loss of patient information. The PRE & ART Register Process assist in keeping all the patient information in one document which includes data on opportunistic diseases like TB and STIs.



**Right: Mrs N. Khwela (Sisonke HAST Coordinator), Ms G. Mthethwa (HST) , Prof. H. Hausler, Mrs J. McGloghlen, Ms J. Uwi- mana (all from UWC) , Mrs N.S. Radebe (Sisonke DM)**

**ABSTINENCE WALK**

The abstinence walk campaign organised by the Department of Health, eThek-wini Community Church and Sisonke District Municipality was held with great excitement and success at Sisonke Health District and surrounding areas.

The Abstinence Walk which started in 2002 is the brain-child of Pastor Vusi Dube and his wife Dr Taki Dube of eThekwini Community Church. The Dubes have a belief that the scourge of

HIV/AIDS, drug abuse and crime can be reduced dramatically if we target the youth and teach them how to behave themselves.

The main message in this campaign was that youth know about their African of self respect and respect for others, their parents and leaders as well as the sanctity of life.

Youth were advised and encouraged to abstain from premarital sex, drugs and alcohol.



**A team of walkers arriving at uMzimkhulu after walking on foot from Ixopo town**

## DISTRICT MANAGER'S MESSAGE

Sisonke district is proud to resent this newsletter and share developments, achievements and challenges with you.

Just a reminder, this district has 4 district hospitals (Christ The King, EG & Usher Memorial, St. Apollinaris and Rietvlei) two specialized hospitals (Umzimkhulu Psychiatric and St. Margaret TB/MDR/XDR), one Community Health Centre (Pholela) 35 clinics including Gateways and 13 Mobile Teams and two Health Posts. EMRS is another critical institution of this district that enhances service delivery.

Sisonke district is very proud of staff that works hard and is committed to service delivery despite the challenges and constraints they work in. This commitment is illustrated by the participation in different initiatives that

aim to improve service delivery such as the Premier's Excellence awards. Two district hospitals (St. Apollinaris and Taylor Bequest) participated and their presence was really felt. Pholela Community Health Centre also participated and was number two intra-departmentally. Umzimkhulu institutions have also contributed to the quality of care delivered to the Sisonke communities. They have participated in the COHSASA accreditation process.

This district has participated in the piloting of an electronic register that will assist in integrating services and ensuring safekeeping of clients' information. This register has now

been cascaded in the whole district and Province.

For all the above achievements, one wishes to express gratitude to all Sisonke district staff. This district has a lot of challenges such as high staff turn over due to poor accommodation facilities, infrastructure but some health workers have stayed on to see the Departmental mandate delivered on.

Despite these challenges health workers have found activities that keep them going such as sports and music. The results of these activities has been seen in the victory made by district teams in both these activities like Rietvlei hospital getting position one in the area competition and



**Nkk N.S. Radebe**  
District Manager

St. Apollinaris in the Provincial competition. In soccer, the district team came third and all these achievements made the district proud and happy but most of all they strengthened relations in the district.

Lastly, the district wishes to thank all those health workers that have left the district for helping put the district where it is now and welcome those that have joined the district teams at district levels and institution

## EDITOR'S QUIP

is with great that I write for this column and compile the first issue of *Sisonke Ngempilo*.

I wish to pass my gratitude to the Sisonke Health District family for welcoming me with warm hands.

We are in the period where health districts are undergoing changes in terms of how they are administered and structured. These developments mean changes in the manner in which we do and look at things.

However, these developments do no alter challenges we face in our endeavors to deliver a better life to the communities we serve.

Our communities still face abject poverty which make it easier for the spread of communicable and chronic diseases.

There is still a big challenge in terms of educating our communities about the ways to face these difficult conditions

Sisonke health district has set up plans to meet these challenges.

We have strengthened our health education campaigns especially on communicable diseases.

St Margaret Hospital has been transformed to a specialised TB/MDR & XDR hospital.

We believe that through cooperation and hard work we can a long way in delivering healthier lifestyle to all the people in our district.



**Zwide Ndwandwe**  
Senior Communication  
Practitioner

## HOME SCENE

Mrs Nomalinge Osei, TB Programme Coordinator, is in charge of one of the most effective health programmes in Sisonke Health District. She enlightens *Sisonke Ngempilo* about her programme.

### **SN. What is the mandate of the District TB programme?**

This unit is responsible for the prevention and control of TB in the district as well as community awareness and collaboration of TB and HIV activities.

### **NO: What activities do you engage in so as to achieve these goals?**

This unit ensures provision of training of CHWs. We also provide technical support and supervision to all facilities in the district and ensures submission of statistics and compile reports for the district and province. We ascertain early identification of cases to reduce the pool of infection in our communities. It is also our duty to ensure availability of drugs in all facilities.

### **SN: What have been the major achievements of the programme so far?**

We have managed to assemble a dedicated team of personnel in all facilities with high burden of TB. We have also set up tracer teams in all sub-districts for identification of cases and tracing of defaulters. Data captures are in place to improve the quality of data.



**Mrs N. Osei**  
**District TB Programme**  
**Coordinator**

We have set up a team of well trained DOT supporters who ensure that patients in our different communities are supported while taking their treatment

We have also intensified TB awareness or education like the one we had at Hlokozi lately as well as the highly successful Hlola Manje campaign we conducted recently.

**SN. Thanks Mrs Osei for sharing this information with us we wish more success in your work.**

## WE CAN BE CONTACTED HERE

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