

Speech by KZN Health MEC, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo on the occasion of a 10 year Celebration of the Friends of Mosvold Scholarship Scheme at Mosvold Hospital

4 December 2010

Programme Director - Mr Vusi Vilakazi, Mosvold Hosp CEO

Amakhosi kanye neziNduna

Thank you Rev. Mathenjwa for an uplifting prayer

Dr Andrew Ross – the pioneer of the Friends of Mosvold Scholarship Scheme

Mrs Elda Nsimbini – Insika nomgogodla wale Foundation

All the past and current Trustees - Mr ZV Gama (Mosvold Hospital);

Ms ND Ntsele - Mosvold Hospital; Mr AJ Mavimbela - Mosvold

Hospital; Dr AJ Ross - University KZN; Mrs ES Nsimbini - Mosvold

Hospital and Ms M Themba - uMkhanyakude District Manager

Hard working and committed Graduates who have benefited from the scheme

Parents of the graduates

Students currently being sponsored

Malunga omphakathi ahloniphekile

We profusely want to thank Dr Andrew Ross, the then Mosvold Hospital Superintendent, for his insight in initiating Friends of Mosvold Scholarship Scheme, a comprehensive programme set up for local schools to promote careers in health sciences as well to inspire learners to dream about what seemed impossible for deep rural areas as this one Dr Ross, we are all proud of your pioneering spirit, people like you in the organisation of which I am a member of are bestowed a highest honour in the form of ISITHWALANDWE. We thank you again.

We also want to extend our warm felt appreciation to Mrs Elda Nsimbini who together with Dr Ross mentored and supported these students. We also extend our gratitude to all those who shared the vision and contributed over the years including Mrs Lynne Fiser of BOE Private Clients; Mr Ken Duncan of the Swiss South African Co-operative Initiative and all the Trustees past and present.

To the first four students who were selected, and assisted, I want to say thank you for working hard and making it possible for Dr Ross and his team to realise that this was a worthwhile exercise. Your hard work and resilience inspired and encouraged them to continue canvassing for more funds to assist other students. Today the foundation has grown and is proud of nurturing and producing more than 70 graduates who now benefit communities where they come from.

I hope the first batch of those students are here with us today:

- France Nxumalo - now a qualified Optometrist
- Dumisani Gumede – now a qualified Physiotherapist

- Nkosingqiphile Nyawo – now a qualified Biomedical Technologist
- Sibusiso Thwala - unfortunately deceased, may his beautiful soul rest in eternal peace.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is very rare that one finds a crop of professionals who when employed in an area go beyond their call of duty and devise means to further uplift the communities they serve.

I know of no other institution that has a foundation as Mosvold has, solely formed to raise funds with an intention of awarding bursaries to the matriculants to address the shortage of doctors and other clinicians. Other institutions and departments, justifiable so, wait for the government to sponsor or provide. In all other areas we are still witnessing service delivery being hampered because people are folding their hands and lacking initiative.

What we now have as Umthombo Youth Development Foundation is of great help to our Government and the people of KwaZulu Natal as a whole as it assists in:

- Addressing the scarcity of health clinicians;
- Topping up the Department of Health Bursary scheme;
- Gives financial support to school leavers aspiring to pursue health sciences qualifications;
- Improves the socio-economic conditions of recipients and the communities they serve;
- Providing a benchmark to other provinces to replicate this model.

- Promoting a good working partnership between the Department of Health and the Higher Education Institutions;

In Umthombo Youth Development Foundation we are very proud to have a partner that works with us to produce clinicians who are a scarce skill that are willing work and be contracted to serve communities where they are needed most.

We are also happy with the Foundation's selection criteria as it fits hand in glove with our own Departmental policy of prioritising students from poor communities.

Both as a Department and government, we are doing our best in sponsoring needy students. We all know that the Government does provide for qualifying tertiary students through the NATIONAL STUDENTS FINANCIAL AID SCHEME [NSFAS] as well as through the TERTIARY EDUCATION FUND OF SOUTH AFRICA [TEFSA]. Over and above this aid, the KwaZulu Department of Health initiated its own bursary scheme assisting those pursuing health oriented disciplines. This year over 700 students selected from all the KZN Health Districts are being sponsored to the total value of R42.8 million.

We thus welcome the idea of Umthombo Youth Development Foundation expanding to select and sponsor students who come from other districts and not limiting the aid to uMkhanyakude. As a Department we commit to work with you in a very seamless and professional manner especially now that we have recently signed a

Memorandum of Co-operation that will regulate on how we can best address the shortages of health care professionals at rural hospitals.

We hope that this collaboration will hold and develop to cover post graduate students who will assist in solving both administrative and clinical shortfalls that the Department experiences at various levels.

Ladies and gentlemen, both our Premier, Dr Zweli Mkhize as well as the National Minister of Health, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi are very elated and supportive of this initiative and we all hope that more sponsors and fundraisers can join in to realize the dreams of our youth.

Thank you again for choosing to work quietly whilst producing such excellent results. We hope that the 110 students you are supporting this year will soon come back and be an inspiration to all the youth of our country.

I wish all of you a peaceful festive season and a prosperous new year.

I thank you.