

**Speech by the Hon. KZN Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo on the occasion of the launch of the Dual Protection sexual education campaign, UMgungundlovu TVET**

**14 May 2015**

Honourable MEC for Health

UMgungundlovu TVET Management

Head Office Management

DOH District and Provincial management

Religious leaders

District Traditional Health Practitioners

Developmental Partners

Student Representative Council

TVET Students

Media present

All protocol observed,

Programme Director; allow me to start by thanking the Management of UMgungundlovu TVET for embracing and giving support to this initiative aimed at securing the future of our young people.

As the Department of Health in KZN we really appreciate the open mindedness of the Principal, Ms P.N Ntshangase, for giving us access to all the five campuses, situated at Edendale; Plessislaer; Midlands; UMsunduzi and Northdale.

Our chosen theme for this important engagement is:

*“Dual protection, twice as safe”*

We are here in line with the President's directive of implementing the Comprehensive Plan for Management, Care and Treatment of HIV and AIDS in its totality with much vigor.

This Comprehensive Plan is aimed at preventing the spread of HIV infections and coming up with a series of interventions aimed at improving the lives of those infected and affected by HIV and AIDS.

Our initiative to launch the **Dual Protection Sexual Education Campaign** is also a means to actualize the 2014 Melbourne motto of – SCALE UP which calls for:

- Zero new HIV infections
- Zero mother to child transmission of HIV
- Zero AIDS deaths
- Zero discrimination

As a Province we also have to do more especially now that the 2016 World AIDS Conference will once again be hosted by EThekweni Metro as it happened in the year 2000.

As young people, we have thus made you our priority as you are the ones most at risk when it comes to your sexual health being compromised.

When we launch Dual Protection, we must be seen to adding rather than replacing past strategies.

We strongly support the campaign of abstinence from sex that is enhanced by **Isilo Samabandla** on **Umkhosi Womhlanga**.

For those who are not able to live up to this noble dream, we then provide this process of Dual Protection so that they don't get exposed to risky outcomes in life.

**As a matter of fact, it is known that:**

- Young people do engage in sex
- „ „ engage in unprotected sex
- „ „ as a result of unprotected sex, fall pregnant
- In unprotected sex, young people get HIV and STIs

In this country, we have to mention that one million babies are born each year, 8% of these, which is 80 000 in numbers, are delivered by teen moms.

These young people in most cases lose a sense of direction in life in terms of finishing school and also have a much higher chance of dying from pregnancy-related diseases.

It has also been stated that approximately 50% of pregnancies worldwide are unwanted and unplanned. So, how do we address this?

We need to agree that – **It is an effort to have sex:**

- You first have to find a private place for the act
- Then you undress – you cannot call this effort **IPHUTHA**

In this campaign today we are talking of one's **responsibilities** that entail:

- Abstain and delay the beginning of the first sexual debut
- Be mutually faithful to one sexual partner
- Use condoms correctly and consistently every time I have sex to protect me from unwanted pregnancy and STI, including HIV
- Know my HIV status by testing once or twice a year
- Know signs and symptoms of STIs (burning urine, abdominal pains, smelling discharge and sores around the genitals)
- Seek medical help with the first sign of STIs
- Inform my partner/s when infected with STIs to receive early treatment
- Always communicate my health status (including my HIV and TB status) to the healthcare provider in order to receive appropriate intervention (consistency)
- Going for TB screening if TB suspect.

It is most important for us to also talk about the results of the **CAPRISA** study that shows that girl children appear to contract HIV much earlier than their male counterparts, due to sexual relations with older men.

To make a practical example, we have discovered that almost all children who are entering school and finishing at grade 7 are HIV negative, both boys and girls... unless there one or two cases of failed Prevention of Mother To Child (PMTCT) HIV transmission.

The following year, as they go to high school, the status quo prevails and they are all HIV negative. But when they complete grade 12, about 7-10 % of girls are HIV positive, yet the boys have remained HIV

negative. This is because the girls are not sleeping with boys of the same age. They are getting infection from the older generation. So, when they enter university, 10% of the girls are HIV positive. But by the time they finish their Honours degree after four years, there is 25% HIV positivity among both young men and women, which means they have infected each other. Therefore, as a society we need to confront and condemn this practice whereby old men go after young women. It should have no place in our society.

As the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health, we are therefore embarking on this campaign to promote the importance of Dual Protection when it comes to sex. We are urging all the people of KwaZulu-Natal; especially young people, 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.

For our young people, the Government is offering:

- FREE contraceptives,
- FREE Flavoured condoms, and
- FREE Medical Male Circumcision

We are also cautioning that whether you are a circumcised man or a woman on contraceptives, make condoms a non-negotiable.

Medical Male Circumcision does lessen 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.

Please make use of the services we are rendering today:

- HIV counselling and testing
- MMC
- TB Screening
- IUCD and Implanon insertion
- Breast Examination
- Pap smear
- Oral and injectable contraceptives
- Female and Male condom distribution
- Management of Minor ailments
- BP, BMI and Blood sugar screening
- Eye screening

We plead with you to continue giving support to this initiative aimed at ensuring that you complete your studies alive and healthy.

Always be conscious of the fact that many people who are in relationships begin by using condoms, but after a period of time, when they feel that they "trust" each other, they stop using condoms. Unfortunately, trust has little to do with whether a partner is already infected with an STI.

It is best to continue to use protection. Test all the time

**Dual Protection is the most comprehensive answer.**

I thank you.