



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

CORPORATE COMMUNICATION SERVICES

Natalia, 330 Longmarket Street, Pietermaritzburg, 3201
Private Bag X9051, Pietermaritzburg, 3200
Tel.: 033 395 2743, Fax.: 033 845 0378
webmaster@dohho.kzntl.gov.za

MEDIA RELEASE

12 DECEMBER 2005

KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCIAL HEALTH INDABA

Hundreds of delegates which include health officials, traditional healers, academics, non-governmental organizations, statutory bodies, private health care groups, community leaders, business leaders as well as religious leader have converged at the ICC in Durban to discuss and deliberate on issues in an enough of improving and attaining the vision of giving optimal health status in KwaZulu-Natal.

This is part of the two-day Provincial Health Indaba, which ends on Tuesday, 13 December 2005. "Advancing the vision of the Freedom Charter through the delivery of health care," is the theme for this Indaba.

Speaking at the official opening, Health Minister, Dr Manto Tshabalala-Msimang acknowledged that poverty still remains the main factor, which exposes the people to the risk of ill health. She highlighted some of the achievements and the strides that the Department of Health has made, "We have increased the budget for the Hospital Revitalisation Programme by 12,7% from R 911 million in the last financial year to R1, 027 billion this year," said the Minister. This will go a long way in increasing the number of projects aimed at improving the infrastructure and quality of services in public health institutions.

In 2006 much effort and focus will be on creating awareness about HIV and AIDS and TB, "We are working with the Medical Rescue Council in research and development of traditional medicine. To this end the MEC's and I have decided to implement a TB crisis plan. We shall be adopting this plan at the January meeting of the National Health Council," said the National Minister. The rollout of antiretrovirals continues to expand steadily, in KwaZulu-Natal the department is rolling out ARVs to 52 hospitals, whilst voluntary counseling and testing is available in all hospitals, Community Health Centres and clinics.

Some of the issues to be discussed in the Indaba include, Quality of Health Care, Access to Health Care, Health Legislation, Health Charter and HR Challenges. In her address, Provincial Health MEC, Mrs. Peggy Nkonyeni said the majority of the people of KwaZulu-Natal rely on public health services for health care, "We have identified certain priorities which include Public health approach to disease management, strengthening community based health care, comprehensive approach to management of HIV and AIDS, promoting healthy lifestyles, strengthening Primary Health Care, hospital delivery systems and Emergency Medical Rescue Services and building a revolutionary and human sensitive cadre of public health personnel responsive to the needs of the province," she said.

The MEC did admit that there are still challenges that the department is faced with which range from staff shortages to backlogs in the construction of clinics and rehabilitation of hospital infrastructure, "This Indaba, must help us to review the progress made, our shortfalls as well as give direction so as to attain the vision of giving care to all citizens," said the MEC.

ENDS.

Issued by the Provincial Department of Health

For more information please contact Lindiwe Khuzwayo on 083 393 9943 or Desmond Motha on 083 295 3901.

