



PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL
CORPORATE COMMUNICATION SERVICES

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MEDIA STATEMENT

The Department of Health in KwaZulu-Natal is already implementing the recommendations made in the report of the Investigation into the outbreak of Klebsiella infections at the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Hospital Neonatal Unit and ICU that was released by the National Minister of Health, Dr M. Tshabalala-Msimang, on 7th July 2005.

A meeting has been held by the Head of Department of Health in the Province, Senior Officials of the Health Services Cluster at the Head Office, Senior Clinicians in Paediatrics and/or Neonatology responsible for the nursery and neonatal ICU, Infection Control Experts and Medical Microbiologists. From the meeting a plan of action was compiled with regards to who does what by when, to ensure that the recommendations of the report are rolled out throughout the Province in all neonatal units, both nursery' and neonatal ICU's as well as labour wards, which is one of the main sources of babies entering the neonatal Unit.

All hospitals in the Province are implementing the recommendations of the report and reviewing their practices and operations in the light of the report and enriching their practices where necessary in order to reduce any further outbreaks of infection.



A Task Team has been appointed to review all deaths that have occurred in Neonatal Units, both Nursery's and ICU's, at Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Hospital over the last three years. This will include all allegations of outbreaks.

A preliminary report will be available as a matter of urgency and a full report will follow as soon as possible thereafter. The Task Team is made up of experts in Paediatrics and/or Neonatal, Medical Microbiology, Infection Control and Pharmacy. They have the power to co-opt if necessary.

Every death that occurs in a public hospital is reviewed and investigated as part of normal clinical practice which is called Clinical Audit. This identifies the exact causes of death and whether there were any primary or secondary preventable factors. This enables the Department to improve the quality of care and is standard practice in health delivery and care of patients. The team is expected to report back within two weeks and will work together with the team that is reviewing Infection Control and current practices throughout the Department.

The Task Team will also report on the profile of morbidity (illness) and mortality (deaths) in all Neonatal Units both Nursery's and Neonatal ICU's in order to provide the full profile of admissions and discharges from these Units.

ENDS.

**PROF RONALD GREEN-THOMPSON
(SUPERINTENDENT- GENERAL)**