



**HEALTH**  
KwaZulu-Natal

## CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

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**TO: ALL MEDIA**

**DATE: 26 OCTOBER 2006**

**EMBARGO: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY**

*“Building awareness, reducing risk: mental illness and suicide”*

400 million people worldwide suffer from mental or neurological disorders or psychological problems. Suicide has become a pressing health concern in our country as it constitutes 10% of death in South Africa and it is estimated that 79% of suicide victims evidenced mental illness.

The theme adopted for the day, “Building Awareness, Reducing Risk: Mental Illness and Suicide,” encourages the community to make a meaningful effort in reducing the risk of suicide among people with mental illness.

The MEC will on Sunday, 29 October host the World and Mental Health Day event as means of not only educating the public about mental health but also to raise public awareness on suicide as one of the greatest health epidemics,

“Suicide represents 1.4% of the total global burden of the disease. It is a complex human behavior and final common pathway for many human problems. It is of the utmost importance to ensure that people are educated and we should discourage them in feeling that suicide is a reasonable course of action. We must give them the necessary support and improve on the access to mental health services and offer support to high risk groups,” says the MEC for Health, Mrs. Peggy Nkonyeni.

Members of the media are invited to attend the World Mental Health Day event, which will take place as follows:

**DATE: 29 OCTOBER 2006**

**TIME: 10H00**

**VENUE: KHULA VILLAGE, ST. LUCIA**

**Transport for media is available and will depart from the Durban Playhouse at 08h00.**

**For more information please contact Leon Mbangwa on 083 459 8695**

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