

TO: ALL MEDIA

DATE: 1 April 2009

EMBARGO: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

No Meningitis - Parents should not panic

The Department of Health, uThungulu District Office, received complaints from parents and the principal of Grantham Park School where there were fears of meningitis after four children presented with meningitis like symptoms (headache, fever & stiff neck).

Our team of Environmental Health Practitioners, Infection Control and Primary Health Care nurses visited the school to educate learners about precautionary majors and basic hygiene. The four children who were said to have been suspected were sent to various hospitals where the following reports have emerged;

- Child1: Admitted at Stanger Hospital - on investigation, child had viral meningitis and was discharged (Grade4).
- Child 2: Went to The Bay Hospital (not Garden Clinic) examined diagnosed as having Urinary Tract Infection - no Meningitis indicated (Grade4).
- Child 3: Who complained of headache and stiff neck - found to be a netball player - sustained an injury.
- Child 4: Reported headache and painful neck during the presence of the team at the school. Was fetched by parent – still awaiting a follow up report.

The School was closed yesterday by the Department of Education as a precautionary measure. We urge parents to be vigilant but must not create unnecessary panic. Meningococcal meningitis can only be confirmed after laboratory tests have been done and we encourage all parents to take their kids to the local health facility and meningococcal meningitis is confirmed before alarm is raised.

For further details, please contact Chris Maxon at 083 285 0567.

Ends

ISSUED BY:

CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

KWAZULU-NATAL: DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH