

TO: ALL MEDIA  
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## **Media Statement: 'To change the picture of disease in this province we need you to act wherever you are - MEC Dhlomo**

"I invite you colleagues to work with the department in meeting its strategic outcome of prolonging the life of South Africans as this cannot be achieved by government alone," Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo MEC for Health in KwaZulu-Natal told a packed hall at Addington Hospital when he addressed faith leaders, councilors and members of hospitals boards during his visit to eThekweni today.

The MEC is on a road show visiting various districts and talking to community leaders about the need to forge close ties in the improvement of the health status of the people of KwaZulu-Natal. Today MEC Dhlomo visited eThekweni District where managers from the local hospitals, Councilors, Traditional Health Practitioners and hospital boards were called upon to play a meaningful role in turning the tide against the gloomy picture of diseases in the province.

MEC Dhlomo told the meetings that; "In countries such as China, Japan, Brazil and Cuba people live up to the ages beyond 70years because of no miracle from God but by preventing diseases." He further announced that in a date to be announced soon he will be launching a healthy lifestyle workplace programme at Inkosi Albert Luthuli Central and King Edward VII Hospitals to encourage health workers to engage in physical activity. He invited faith leaders and Councilors.

The MEC gave a presentation on the health status of KwaZulu-Natal as compared to other provinces. He mentioned, among others, that the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) announced that they had to remove more than 80 000 people from the voter's roll before the 2009 elections. "This number is more than a combination of annual deaths from three provinces. Again, these were not older people dying naturally." These were in the ages below 30 years, he said.

The MEC further told the meeting that girls are contracting HIV from the age of 15 years in KwaZulu-Natal. The picture is different for boys in the same province. He said that during the medical male circumcision campaign, boys in the ages of 15 – 19 years all tested HIV negative. "Where are these young girls getting this HIV?" he asked the house.

He told the meeting that the challenge is to change the picture of disease in the province. He challenged leaders to join hands with government to making a difference by taking action wherever they are.

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