

## **KZN Health MEC and HOD heap praise on taxi passenger who helped deliver of a baby**

KwaZulu-Natal Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo and Health Head of Department Dr Sibongile Zungu have heaped praises on a quick-thinking 39 year-old taxi passenger who helped to deliver a baby in a long distance taxi this week.

The taxi was traveling from Johannesburg to Vryheid on Monday afternoon, and among the passengers was a heavily pregnant mother.

According to Zonke Ntuli, the 'nurse' passenger; when the taxi got to Volksrust, the heavily pregnant woman started getting into labour as they noticed her water breaking. Initially they thought that she would be able to make it to Newcastle, however when the taxi was traveling through Amajuba Pass, the baby started coming out.

Ntuli, an unemployed mother who lives in Vryheid, said: "When the lady started getting into labour, the taxi stopped; everybody was panicked with others screaming and running away. I then realized that the baby or the mother would die and then decided to help. I was also scared as the baby was coming out feet first but urged the lady to push. A baby boy came out and I was very relieved when he started crying, that he was indeed alive!"

Ntuli continued to say that although the baby had been born there was yet another challenge; it was still attached to the umbilical cord. She recalled looking around and finding a bottle which she broke and used a piece of it to cut the cord and tie it up.

The baby was then wrapped in clothing and they continued with their journey until an Ambulance arrived. The mother and baby were stabilized and then transported to Newcastle Provincial Hospital.

Zonke, who has been described as a heroin, said: "Nothing could have prepared me for what happened, and I was just as shocked as the rest of the passengers. But I'm pleased to have helped the mother deliver her baby. I wish both of them well, and I want to thank the rest of the passengers because I could not have done it alone."

In a joint statement, Dr Dhlomo and Dr Zungu said: "We are very proud of the courageous actions of the passenger who helped deliver the baby. Her actions are indeed exemplary. What she did was a personification of Ubuntu, and the Nguni adage that umuntu ungumuntu ngabantu (I am because you are). We would also like to express our best wishes to the mother and baby."

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Issued by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health