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## **KZN Health MEC, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo on the occasion of the National Obesity Week**

'The time has come for our people to understand that being obese is detrimental to good health', says KZN Health MEC, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo as the world observes the National Obesity Week from the 15th to the 19th of October.

Dhlomo's concern is based on statistics released by the World Health Organization (WHO) which says at least 2.8 million adults around the globe die each year as a result of being overweight or obese.

He says South Africa faces a bigger danger as current efforts are concentrated on fighting HIV and Tuberculosis neglecting a new encroaching threat in a form of non-communicable diseases. 'Already in this country some 66% of women and 33% of men are overweight and our healthcare facilities are observing an increase of relatively young people suffering from high blood pressure; coronary heart diseases; diabetes and several types of cancers.' He says this has to be curbed as it now threatens people at the most productive period of their lives.

'Indeed, most of these conditions are self-made as they come about through what we eat; drink and the choice we make of not engaging in physical exercise.

Dhlomo says this country has made so much investment and gains in fighting HIV, AIDS and Tuberculosis and that it can now ill-afford to lose lives through Non-Communicable Diseases, better known as Diseases of Lifestyle.

'In actual fact, diseases of lifestyle are not only a burden to the healthcare system; they are also expensive in terms of what we consume in the form of junk food, cigarettes, fizzy/ alcohol drinks and worse, very expensive to manage to those requiring treatment.

In this beautiful country, we as adults are hardly role models for the next generation and it's time for all of us to change and take ownership of our health and live healthily,' says the Health MEC.