

## **KZN Department of Health Medical edges closer towards reaching goal of 2.5 million Medical Male Circumcision (MMC) target by 2016**

The resumption of Medical Male Circumcision (MMC) camps during the December and January holidays is poised to help the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health move closer towards realising its target of conducting 2.5 million Medical Male Circumcision procedures by 2016.

This is aimed at curbing the spread of HIV and Aids in the province.

Several studies have shown that medical male circumcision reduces chances of acquiring HIV by circumcised males engaging in sexual intercourse by approximately 60%. The procedure is also noted to have benefits of keeping the male genital organs in a good hygienic state, reducing the chances of penile cancer and reducing the chances of the transmission of human papilloma virus which may lead to cervical cancer in the female partner.

Having commenced on 07 December 2014, the MMC camps are taking place throughout KwaZulu-Natal's 11 health districts and will continue until 31 January 2015.

Following a call in 2009 from His Majesty the King, the Provincial Government through the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health embarked on a drive to promote and strengthen Medical Male Circumcision (MMC) in the Province.

Since 2010, when the Department established the KwaZulu-Natal Medical Male Circumcision Centre of Excellence, it has circumcised more than 474 556 males. This figure is up by 28 000 since the last MMC Camps in October. The Department's target is to circumcise 2,5 million males by 2016.

### Schedule of Male medical circumcision camps : December / January school holiday 2014

The three-day camps can take place any day of the week during the school holidays, but they are usually held from Friday to Sunday. The clients come to a venue, usually a school, where they are taught life skills, undergo HIV testing and counselling and then circumcised. They are then reviewed and discharged the following day.

Accommodation and catering is provided for the three days.

South Africa has 6.14 million people living with HIV/AIDS (HSRC 2012) and KwaZulu-Natal has the highest burden of the disease with an estimated number of people living with HIV/AIDS at 1 622 850. There are about 828 230 HIV Infected clients on ARV treatment, which translates to about 52% of total people on treatment and almost half of HIV infected people are not on ARV treatment.

The Minister for Health, Hon Dr Aaron Motsoaledi and his counterpart, the Hon KwaZulu-Natal MEC Dr S.M. Dhlomo have called for a scaling up of MMC activities scale up in KwaZulu-Natal in order to curb the spread of the HIV pandemic in the province.

In a joint statement, Dr Dhlomo and KwaZulu-Natal Health Head of Department Dr Sibongile Zungu said: "These MMC Camps provide an ideal setting for the grooming of young men of tomorrow in order to prepare them for the future. We would like to really urge parents and caregivers to take this opportunity to ensure that their children attend these camps and undergo Medical Male Circumcision (MMC) because it has great potential to turn around the prevalence of HIV and change our future for the better. We'd like to appeal to adult men who are not circumcised as well to undergo this procedure. Medical Male Circumcision is free and is performed discreetly and by medically-trained experts. This means minimum pain or discomfort for those who are being circumcised. The healing process is relatively quick and the health benefits are life-long."

If you want to get circumcised, you must:

- Go to your nearest clinic where you will get advice and support
- Prepare to be tested for diabetes, High Blood Pressure, TB and HIV

When you have been circumcised you must continue using condoms.

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