

MEDIA RELEASE  
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## **KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health and Transport launch festive season plan for Emergency and Security Services**

KwaZulu-Natal Health MEC, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo, has assured the people of KwaZulu-Natal, as well as visitors to the province, that the Department is ready for any eventualities during the festive season.

Dr Dhlomo was speaking at Mooi River this morning, where the Departments of Health and Transport jointly launched their plans for the Festive Season.

With the national closure of schools, factories and other industries; and the start of the festive season, all major routes throughout KZN experience a remarkable influx of road usage and traffic congestion. This is because of people who are returning home from places of work outside of the province and holiday-makers entering the province, or travelers within the province.

During this period, the province of KwaZulu-Natal must ensure that it is adequately prepared to deal with incidents of trauma and fatalities resulting from road crashes, violence and drowning at the beaches.

According to studies, most road accidents happen as a result of human error, in the main failure to adhere to road traffic rules. Communities also experience heightened forms of social ills such as abuse alcohol and substances; crimes, including violence which lead to trauma.

These incidents exert pressure on government resources as a result of people having to be treated in government hospitals and those who require rehabilitation. In other cases, victims end up having to receive social grants - let alone those who pay the ultimate price - death.

The Festive Season Plan is a joint effort between Emergency Medical Services, Forensic Pathology Services and a multi-disciplinary team made up of the Road Traffic Inspectorate and the South African Police Service (SAPS).

The launch highlighted the province's preparedness across emergency medical services - including Emergency Medical Services (EMS), road safety, and community safety.

During the launch, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health showcased its resources (human and equipment), including the number of additional ambulances, response vehicles and rescue vehicles that will be deployed at strategic points on all major routes, in order to improve response times to adverse incidents.

Speaking at the launch, Dr Dhlomo said: "As the KwaZulu-Natal government, it is very important for us to showcase our readiness to deal with eventualities that we might face over the Festive Season.

"One of the most important things is to thank all our staff, not only in health, EMS, but the police, RTI and all other staff members who are going to forego their holidays during this festive season to be on the road, working".

Dr Dhlomo said the positioning of emergency vehicles in strategic points is key to ensure that those who need emergency health care, receive it within the "golden hour".

"If you've been in an accident, it is crucial that you receive medical attention within the first hour to

increase chances of survival. We are ready and available to assist you on roadside and to transport people early enough to our hospitals.”



*KZN Health MEC and his Transport and Community Safety and Liaison counterpart, MEC Willie Mchunu, launched the Festive Season safety plan at the Mooi River Toll Plaza today. They spent time educating motorists about road safety. A road block was also held at the scene.*

Photos by Themba Mngomezulu (KZN Department of Health)

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