

MEDIA STATEMENT

10 July 2015

KZN Health MEC invites the public to take advantage of the male medical circumcision camps, which are now open

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health's Medical Male Circumcision (MMC) camps have begun in earnest throughout its 11 health districts.

The MMC camps, which began earlier this week, are aimed at curbing the spread of HIV and Aids in the province and will continue until 01 August 2015.

Medical male circumcision has been proven to reduce chances of acquiring HIV by circumcised males engaging in sexual intercourse by approximately 60%.

Research findings released by Statistics SA last month show that Tuberculosis and HIV-related illnesses remain the two leading causes of death among young people.

Medical Male Circumcision 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.

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 520 000 males.

The MMC Camps are currently ongoing and the dates, venues and contact details thereof are included in an attachment accompanying this email.

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 on are not on ARV treatment.

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

KwaZulu-Natal Health MEC Dr Dhlomo says: "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 is safe and 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.

ENDS

Issued by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health