

MEDIA RELEASE
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200 Men and boys circumcised in Nkandla in one day

No fewer than 200 men and boys were circumcised in Nkandla during a visit by KwaZulu-Natal Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo yesterday.

Dr Dhlomo's visit will be followed by a fully-fledged Operation Sukuma Sakhe event which will be led by KwaZulu-Natal Premier Senzo Mchunu and all members of his cabinet in Nkandla next Wednesday.

Premier Mchunu's goal is to ensure that people in every corner of the country have access to services.

The MEC promised to report to the Premier challenges faced by the community of Nkandla, such as access to birth certificates for children whose mothers do not live with them. As a result, some of these children can't access government social grants and when they want IDs they do not get them. "We have to help those children," he said.

Dr Dhlomo said that it had become clear that most of the challenges experienced by people on the ground are health-related.

"Operation Sukuma Sakhe is a profoundly useful tool in determining responses to people's needs. The school health teams which visit children assist greatly in curbing issues such as oral health, impaired vision and challenges with their sense of hearing. These are issues that would otherwise inhibit their learning. The School Health Team works in conjunction with Family Health Teams. Where the School Health Teams identify children with ailments, they are then able to attend to those children and then relay this information to our Family Health Teams who follow up by checking the situation in these children's homes. And quite often, you find that parents or caregivers themselves need help. So, we appreciate them and we appreciate Operation Sukuma Sakhe very much."

Dr Dhlomo also visited Chwezi Clinic, where the Medical Male Circumcision procedures took place. Later, he stopped over at Ndabuhlezi Community Garden and also at Thala High school, where he heaped praise on the management and learners for attaining 76% matric pass rate last year, urging them to do even better.

He cautioned learners to abstain from sex for as long as possible and espoused the virtues of the Department's "First Things First, Graduate Alive". He also decried the rampant rate of teenage pregnancy and warned girl children about the dangers of "Sugar Daddies."

"When children arrive for grade 7, they are all HIV negative. However, when they get to grade 12, 10% of the girls are HIV positive. Therefore, girls need to be wary of older men. They need to realise that the future is in their own hands. Falling pregnant before they are ready will have a negative impact on their future."

Issued by the Office of the KZN Health MEC



KZN Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo addressing learners at Nqamboshana Primary School in Nkandla



KZN Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo addressing learners at Thala High School in Nkandla