

KZN Health MEC applauds the resolutions of the TAC's People's Health Summit

MEC Dhlomo, who also addressed the Summit that was held on 28 July 2015 at Royal Fire International Ministry in Pietermaritzburg, commits to support recommendations raised by the TAC. The gathering attended by about 240 delegates from civil society; research; government and interfaith met to discuss and assess the Provincial response to HIV prevention and treatment and to also to come up with an action plan to save lives in KZN.

Even though great strides are recognised to have been made in the fight AIDS in KZN; under the theme: Re-Building Solidarity and Action Plan to save lives, the TAC has come up with resolutions on how to scale up. MEC Dhlomo, who recognizes TAC as a partner and a stakeholder, says he is taking note on what has been raised as it pertains to:

- KZN must focus more on behaviour Change Interventions among all population groups with focused messages on multiple partnerships, transactional/early/cross generational sex.
- There is political leadership from MEC for Health and the Premier but some Mayors and Councillors remain a problem. Reviving political leadership commitment and leadership support for HIV prevention will be crucial to realizing HIV prevention results in the next phase.
- The continuing of new infections is an emergency. Therefore KZN must increase focus on socio-cultural factors that hinder behaviour change.
- KZN must speed up a process of allowing condoms in schools because parents' fears are unwarranted. The available evidence does not indicate that the provision of condoms to young people leads to increased or earlier sexual activity.
- Gender-based violence is a violation of human rights and it limits right of entry to services. Domestic violence and sexual assault fuels HIV infection, stigma and discrimination. Central to prevention efforts is a clear target to reduce actual incidence rate of sexual assault and children abuse.
- Men forums must be expanded in all communities and must encourage positive role-models for men.
- Traditional leaders must be involved in communities and must become leaders in HIV prevention, treatment and care based on human rights for all.
- KZN Health MEC and the Premier must find ways to stop Kim Cools of uMlingo WamaNgcolosi for making claims that he can cure HIV. We should target him and make example.
- Operation Sukuma Sakhe must be assisted to develop a leadership development programme including KZN districts leaders such as, people of faith; school principals; community health workers; shop-stewards; local business owners and leaders; traditional leaders; NGOs and CBOs – particularly women, youth, people with disabilities and local lesbian, gay and transgender leaders.
- The current Provincial Council on Aids Secretariat must maintain a greater and coordinated involvement of civil society, People Living with HIV and communities in the response implementation, especially at local and constituency levels.
- The Department of Health must also strengthen the supply chain management of HIV prevention medical and pharmaceutical supplies.
- KZN department to assure that people diagnosed with cancer have access to appropriate quality treatment, follow up and achieve zero percent disparities in treatment outcomes.
- Involve women in Voluntary Medical Male Circumcision in VMMC decision making as they are the ones who can influence their partner's decision to undergo VMMC, post-operation care and adherence since VMMC offers direct benefits to women.
- Ensure that male circumcision is performed by well-trained practitioners in antiseptic settings under conditions of informed consent, confidentiality, risk reduction counselling and safety.

- Ensure that male circumcision does not replace other known effective HIV prevention methods and is always considered as part of a comprehensive prevention package.

'We are open to suggestions from committed partners like the TAC especially in the fight against new HIV infections. Our message in this regard is clear as it pertains to calling for abstinence and delay of the first sexual debut; mutually faithfulness to one sexual partner; correct and consisted use of condoms at all times as well as HIV testing annually, says Dhlomo.

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