Men's Month call : KZN Health MEC urges all Men to be agents of positive change and protect Women and Children

4 July 2018

"July is Men's Month, where we are reinvigorating the spirit of men of integrity, and calling upon all of them to step forward and help us plant the seed of restoring people's consciences in our communities, especially among men. This will help create a spirit of peace and love in our communities, at home, and wherever men are."

This was the heartfelt message from KZN Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo, as he visited the family of the murdered Ms Cacisile Gumede, who was a data capturer at Msunduzi Clinic at KwaXimba, Cato Ridge.

Ms Gumede, 34, was a former ANC Youth Leader branch chairperson and had been involved in the local ANC structures. She was shot and killed by a person believed to be her builder on Saturday night. The man, believed to be a Mozambican national, was filmed on video as he shot himself in the head and died on the spot on the next day

MEC Dhlomo also led a prayer at the Department's provincial headquarters Natalia Building this afternoon, where he once again urged men to take up the cudgels, lead by example, and say NO! to the abuse and murder of defenseless women and children.

The prayer meeting was also attended by the Acting Head of Department Dr Musa Gumede, other senior leaders and about 300 staff members. It is in line with a cabinet resolution for the province to ask for divine intervention in fighting social ills.

There were emotional scenes as MEC Dhlomo read out the names of 44 employees of the Department who have lost their lives due to sudden and unexpected death in the past 18 months.

Earlier in the day, MEC Dhlomo said: *"We are deeply pained that once again we one of our employees, a woman, has lost her life at the hands of a man, at a time when we should be celebrating men of integrity, who respect women. This has been a double-blow for us. Firstly, this was one of our children, who worked at our clinic, and was a hard worker… She has also been a youth league leader, and also grew into the mother body. This is painful, the ANC has lost a very prominent and active member. We are here to commiserate with the family, and also call for an increase in men who will not commit such callous acts and put pressure on our communities."*

MEC Dhlomo called for the empowerment of women through education, and described Ms Gumede as an exemplary person, who was building a home despite not earning much as a data capturer.

"We hope that this will be a teaching… to show that when you educate a woman you are taking the country forward. We need to bring to an end the notion that only boy children must be educated. Girl children deserve and are entitled to the same opportunities as their male counterparts. In many cases, girl children are the ones who end up being pillars of families. They contribute significantly to the economy."

Councillor for eThekwini Ward 1, Mr Musa Mkhize expressed his shock and sadness at Ms Gumede's death, saying that he had known her for the past 15 years. He called on the police to work hard to solve this crime, as he believes that there was more to it than meets the eye. *"I want to make this clear. This is organized crime. There is no doubt about that."*

He described Ms Gumede as a committed cadre who cared about the wellbeing of others.

"She's been actively involved in the ANC development structures full time for the past 12 years. In addition to the work that she did for the Department of Health, she was a very helpful person. She was passionate about development and progress. Even when people approached her with problems, she was able to be a bridge and bring those to my attention."