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**SPARKLING BABIES FIGHT IT OUT IN SISONKE DISTRICTHEALTHY BABY COMPETITION**



**Aren't they cute? — Proud and elated mothers holding their healthy babies who earned first prizes in their respective categories- (From left to right) Oluhle Memela (13-18 months), Anathi Ntuli (7-12 months), Olwethu Sigwazi (0-6 months)**

**“Breastfeeding is universally accepted as the best method of feeding babies”**

Sisonke Health District celebrated the Breastfeeding Week by staging the Healthy Baby competition at Pholela CHC.

The Healthy Baby Competition is the initiative of the Department of Health in partnership with Johnson & Johnson that is aimed at supporting mothers to raise healthy babies through exclusive breastfeeding and appropriate alternative feeding as well as suitable complementary feeding in children under the age of 2 years.

The judging criteria included mother's attendance at the clinic during pregnancy; child clinic attendance after birth; child immunization, growth monitoring,

as well as the child's general condition and hygiene.

The competition is held under three categories 0-6 months old, 7-12 months old, and 13-18 months.

The winning babies walked away with prizes including hampers with compliments of J & J, vests, big bath towels, small back packs proudly sponsored by Sisonke Health District

Some of the event activities included education covering breastfeeding/ formula feeding and immunization schedule.

Local artists rendered music and dance items throughout the day. There were also prize hampers for the audience.

## ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

### HLOLA MANJE TB CAMPAIGN TURNS THE TIDE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST TB VIRUS

The fight against TB took another turn as the Sisonke District health workers hit the roads and turfs to partake in the national Hlola Manje TB campaign.

Hlola Manje campaign focused on TB awareness/education and TB testing. Our teams were scattered all over the five sub-districts spreading messages through door to door (house visits) and community gatherings.

The figures show that the campaign was the resounding triumph against TB with the success rate of 66%.

TB awareness teams visited 172 households and addressed 409 people. The massive 9296 people visited campaign sites.



**Part of the crowd that visited the Nkwelabantwana Hlola Manje TB campaign sites to get TB education and tested**

The impressive 3411 came for testing and 3140 tested and got their results

There were 34 positive results and 25 of them were new cases with 9 retreatment cases.

## VITAMIN A CAMPAIGN STRIVES TO SAVE BABIES LIVES

The National Vitamin A campaign turned out to be a big success in the Sisonke Health District.

The Vitamin A campaign is held twice annually as part of the Health Department's strategy to ensure that all children under the age of 5 years receive their vitamin A by targeting hard to reach areas.

Vitamin A has been scientifically proven to be beneficial to the child as it helps to improve child's eye sight, fights against infections, and also beneficial in cases of diarrhea.

Coverage for the Sisonke sub-districts was as per follows:  
Greater Kokstad 76%; KwaSani 78%; Buhlebezwe 88%; uMzimkhulu 90%.



**Responsible and wise mothers bring their children to get life saving vitamin A droplets at Sangcwaba Clinic**

## EVENT TALK

## HEALTHY LIFESTYLES ESSAY WRITING COMPETITION UNEARTHES NEW WRITERS

The Sisonke District high schools partook in the Healthy Lifestyle's Essay Writing Competition event at Kok's Hill recently.

The Essay Writing Competition is the initiative of the Department of Health's Healthy Lifestyles component that is aimed at raising awareness to school learners about issues that affect their health.

The event was also aimed at bringing health services such as on site oral health screenings and treatments to the needy communities. Our health teams provided services like dental cleaning and extractions, screening and referrals for hypertension and cervical cancer,



**Winning learners from Mariathal Combined, Thibane and Mpunga High schools with their trophies and certificates**

## SISONKE HEALTH DISTRICT TAKES SERVICES TO THE PEOPLE

The concept of taking services to the people is gaining momentum as was evident in the hosting of Eye Care Awareness Event at eMangeni village in eMzimkhulu area recently.

The event was about raising community awareness of eye care. It has been scientifically proven that most of the eye problems are a complication of hypertension and diabetes hence emphasis on education on prevention and management of these conditions.

The following statistics reflects the activities that were conducted on that day: Dental screening. cleaning extractions 16; hypertension screened 82; diabetes screened 78; diabetes regular clients 5; eyes 104; cataracts identified 9; glasses issued 40;



**Part of the eMangeni community listening to health messages about chronic diseases**

## HOME SCENE

Mrs Nomakepu Maka, the Coordinator of Chronic Diseases, Geriatrics and Eye Care Programme, is a very energetic and enthusiastic lady. She speaks to *Sisonke Ngempilo* about her programme.

**SN: What is the actual reference of the programme you lead?**

NM: It is called Chronic Diseases, Geriatrics and Eye Care Programme

**SN: What is the mandate or vision of your programme?**

NM: Our vision is to achieve optimum health for all the people living with chronic conditions, geriatric problems, eye problems and the elderly people within Sisonke District

**SN: What activities do you engage in to attain your goals?**

NM: We actually engage in a number of activities to reach our targets. We work very hard to provide technical support to the institutions and facilities with regard to the programme. As you are aware, we have also intensified health education campaigns in order to promote healthy lifestyle behaviors of people with chronic diseases, prevention of avoidable blindness, ensure quality care of the elderly people. Ensure prevention and management of chronic diseases at primary level.

**SN: What have been the major achievements of the programme so far?**

We have reached some milestones since the inception of the programme. Among these I can mention the improvement of Cancer Screening Coverage within the district. We also have managed to achieve a much higher rate of cataract surgeries. We have trained cataract case finders.



**Mrs Nomakepu Maka, Programme Coordinator: Chronic Diseases, Geriatrics and**

I can say with confidence that we have dedicated chronic representatives in all the institutions in the district. And we have succeeded in the establishment of fully functional support groups i.e. hypertension and diabetes.

I also wish to add that we have been very successful so far in our undertaking to bring health services to the people especially those who have no easy access to health facilities. The case in point is the Eye Care Awareness Event we recently held at the eMangeni area recently.

**SN. What do you have in the pipeline going forward?**

The programme is still having a challenge of ensuring that the elderly people are well informed about the Older Persons Act .

**SN: Thank you Mrs Maka for your time.**

## DISTRICT MANAGER'S MESSAGE

The Sisonke District Management team wishes to thank everyone that has been part of the service delivery team and has contributed to what has been achieved by this team this quarter.

Despite the many challenges and constraints, this district has shown great commitment and tenacity. It has managed to conduct a number of health awareness campaigns that were based on the gaps identified during the DHP and Quarterly reports reviews. Some of these campaigns are reported in this issue.

On behalf of the District Management Team, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to everyone working in this district for walking that extra mile.

I would like to thank Management teams from all the institutions for the achievements made this year. If it was not for the good cooperation, team spirit and the drive to see this district developing further, we would not have achieved all that we have.

I would also like to acknowledge the great job done by different components of the District Office namely the Integrated District Health System and Development, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Corporate Services for ensuring that plans the district had put in place were implemented, monitored and evaluated.

Sisonke district has been blessed in that it had partnered with very committed NGO such as Health Systems Trust, Integrated Primary Health Care, KZNPPHC,

Universities of Western Cape and KZN and ICAP. These partners were there to assist in improving the quality of care in different facilities and this is yielding good results.

Other partners such as Edzimbhulu and Friends of Ireland have assisted in providing structure where services can be provided. I would like to thank these partners for this since it has made the issue of establishing Health Post or "clinics" in very needy places, possible.

Lastly, the Management Team wishes the Sisonke District staff, clients and communities a pleasant and blessed Festive season and a Happy New Year.

## EDITOR'S QUIP

Some pundits are of the view that the fundamental calling of the public servant is to serve where most needed.

As the public servant the ultimate gratification you can get about your public service is to bring about change to the lives of the people she serves.

I have had that feeling recently.

In our endeavour to take health services to the people, Sisonke Health District has ensured that most of our events are held in the remotest areas of the district.

These remote areas happen to be the poorest of the poor in terms of the availability of the

basic infrastructure development. People in these areas lack the very things whose accessibility some of take for granted like clinics, roads, etc.

In some instances people pay up to R100 just to access health

facilities like clinics or hospital

The interesting twist in the organization of our events is that it's not all about talk, catering and entertainment. But the emphasis is on bringing the health services closer the

to people who really need them.

The enthusiasm and dedication shown by our teams is unbelievable and it shows that they really feel the need and urge to serve

The gratefulness that you would witness written over the people's faces is quite overwhelming.

People always appreciate service delivery no matter how big or small it may seem. They will appreciate the launch of a new in the very same manner as being given a walking stick.

I am proud to be the member of the public service family.

## SPORTS SCENE

### SISONKE HEALTH SHINES IN INTERDEPARTMENTAL GAMES

Sisonke Health sports teams were at it again as they clinched top honours in the Sisonke District interdepartmental games held at eXobho Sportsgrounds recently.

The interdepartmental games were organized by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Sports and Recreation in collaboration with various public sector departments. They competed in a variety of sports codes such as soccer, netball, athletics, tug-of-war as well as traditional games like mlabalaba.

Department of Health won the first prize in the mlabalaba contest.

Sisonke Health soccer team lost by 2-1 to earn the runners-up spot following a grueling final against the tough as teak Correctional Services team.

We also reached the rounds in the athletics (relay) and tug-of-war competitions.

The provincial round of the interdepartmental will be held in the near future.

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