

Speech by KZN Health MEC, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo on the occasion of the official opening of Sigweje Clinic at uThukela District

25 May 2012

Ndabezitha – Inkosi M Kunene

Indaka Municipality Mayor – Cllr Mchunu

UThukela Health District Manager – Mrs Zulu

Sigweje Clinic Management

Sigweje Clinic Committee members

Ward Councillor - Z Mabele and all the Councillors present

Malunga omphakathi ahloniphekile

Official presentation of this beautiful Clinic is indeed a very special undertaking for all of us and the 118 358 people residing here at Indaka Municipality in general.

For all this we wish to thank uNdabezitha – Inkosi Kunene for his insight and perseverance in recommending and putting up an application for this much needed facility. We are made to understand that prior to 1994 this area was serviced by the Ezakheni Mobile Clinic that had to attend to both Ilenge and Sigweje communities in one day.

I can surely imagine that no sufficient or quality health care was derived from that set up considering that there would be mothers and their babies; pregnant women for ante natal care; youth for adolescent problems as well as people with minor ailments – all needing to be

attended to. You will also agree that in that kind of a mobile setup ante natal women had to wait longer as there was little or privacy for them to undress. This would have also adversely affected the youth needing services as they could not be comfortable to discuss their problems in front of Inkosi and their parents.

Again, we wish to thank uNdabezitha for putting in an application for the clinic as early as March 1998 as a way of alleviating this situation. We also acknowledge the sterling role played by the Development Committee led by its Chairperson, Mr Maphumulo and the Secretary, Mr Mchunu who in July, 2002 put in a fresh application.

Today we are all happy that the people of Sigweje no have to wait for an Ambulance that would come either from Ladysmith or Dundee in order to receive medical attention, as from November 2011, they now have a **R7, 6 million Clinic** of their own.

As a Department, it is also with great pride that we are officially handing to Ndabezitha, Inkosi Kunene and his people this facility that consist of:

- 4 x Consulting rooms
- A labour ward
- TB counseling room
- Treatment room
- 2 x Counseling rooms
- 2 x Sluice rooms
- 2 x Waiting rooms
- 2 x Nurse's residences accommodating 2 nurses each

- Security Guard House

All of us are also happy that we go far beyond what was offered in the Mobile clinics in terms of services as in this clinic we are able to offer the following:

- Treatment of minor ailments
- Child Health: immunization and integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI)
- Reproductive Health: Cervical cancer screening; Antenatal care service (PMTCT); Maternity; Post natal care and Family planning
- HIV Counseling and Treatment
- TB treatment and management
- Management of chronic diseases, diabetics hypertension, epilepsy
- Youth Friendly Clinic
- Health Education

We are also glad to announce that Primary Health Care Services have not come to a halt to those residing further from this facility as our mobile services still dock at:

- Ezintabeni
- Emungceleni
- Devaal
- Tholeni
- Choboza

In addition Ndabezitha, we do have a Doctor who visits the Clinic every Thursday to cater for those whose ailments require further investigation and attention.

I also have to pay particular attention to the Management and health care workers who are responsible for the running of this clinic. As a Department we have set minimum National Core Standards by which all our health care institutions must abide with. I will tabulate all the six requirements in front of uNdabezitha; the members of our community; the clinic committee and the staff because these are critical areas that make a clinic or a hospital differ from a school or a police station. Our priorities here concern:

a. Values and attitude of staff

- Here we say Managers and staff must always show positive attitude by treating patients, family members and visitors with respect and be always ready to assist them. We insist that all staff members always wear badges to ensure that patients can identify them and that patients be assisted if they wish to make a complaint.

b. Cleanliness

- Managers must ensure that the health care institutions are spotlessly clean; tidy; hygienic and well maintained – this includes clinic grounds and buildings; toilets, wards and public areas.

c. Waiting times

- Managers must reduce the time patients wait to get a file; to see a health professional; to get medicine or treatment; to be transferred and to be discharged. This can be done through constant attention to staff allocation in busy areas like outpatient, casualty and pharmacy.

- Staff should also ensure that seriously ill and high risk patients are attended to first and that emergency care and stabilization is never refused to any patient.

d. Patient safety and security

- Managers are expected to do everything possible to provide safe and reliable care to our patients by ensuring that buildings and grounds are safe for patients and staff by provision of effective security staff and controls

e. Infection prevention and control

- We are calling on managers to take action to prevent hospital acquired infections and respond immediately to situations of risk and outbreaks

f. Availability of basic medicines and supplies

- We are saying medicines and other medical supplies must be available on the day that patients need them. This is done through effective and proactive stock control measures as well as timeous liaison with supply depot or suppliers.

With our District Health Manager, Mrs Zulu, here present, we hope the above will be adhered to as our patients deserve the better.

We also hope uNdabezitha; the clinic committee members and the community at large will work with us to ensure that this beautiful clinic and its health personnel are well looked after and safe all the time.

Let us work together for the attainment of a better health for all.

I thank you