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NEWS

Information for better health ...

OCTOBER–DECEMBER 2021

EDENDALE HOSPITAL RENAMED AFTER HARRY GWALA, THE LATE ANTI-APARTHEID ICON



MEC for KZN Health, Ms Nomagugu Simelane recently held an event where Edendale Regional Hospital was renamed. In attendance were the late Harry Gwala’s close family and relatives. More on page 3

Prince Nhlanguaniso Zulu, son of the late King Goodwill Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu got his Covid-19 jab for the first time at the Royal Show Grounds during Vooma Weekend. **More on page 8**



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World AIDS day commemoration event at Richmond Municipality, Magoda area. **More on page 10**



Launch of Covid-19 Pop-up vaccination site at Natalia Building targeting public servants. **More on page 4**



COVID-19 VACCINATION MYTHS ARE CONTRIBUTING TO THE DWINDLING NUMBERS

At the end of September 2021, President Cyril Ramaphosa announced to the nation that in a strive to upscale the uptake of the covid-19 vaccine, the country would embark on an initiative called the Vooma vaccination weekend.

The first Vooma vaccination weekend took place from 01—03 October 2021.

President Ramaphosa called on all health care workers, political leaders, influential people, and community leaders to go out and encourage people to get vaccinated. During a Vooma

weekend, an extended number of vaccination sites are made available to make access easy for community members.

By the end of December 2022, there had been several Vooma Vaccination Weekends, in the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Province and Nationally.

KZN Premier, Mr. Sihle Zikalala declared that KZN would have weekly Vooma Vaccination weekends. It meant that every weekend in the province would be a Vooma weekend.

Statistics are showing that males are not coming in numbers to vaccinate.

Those who are 12-17 years old, 18—34 years old, and 35—49 years of age are also not coming in large numbers.

The number of people who come for vaccination is dwindling. It is noted that myths that are spread through social media and via the grapevine are the main causes of the decreasing numbers.

The number of 12-17-year-olds who are vaccinated is very low. Statistics show little uptake for people in this age band.

This is the age category that is highly infectious and can easily transmit the virus. This is also the age category that is on social media platforms and can be easily manipulated with fake information. Some are willing to vaccinate but are diverted by their parents' and guardians' refusals.

The province and the district is implementing strategies with external stakeholders to increase the uptake of vaccines. Some areas need more focus than others. More community education and follow-ups need to happen



Happy after their received their dose of the Pfizer vaccine, 12 and 13 year old boys from the Dambuza area in Pietermaritzburg

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KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE
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KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health



KZN Department of Health



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**GROWING
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MEC FOR KZN HEALTH RENAMES EDENDALE HOSPITAL

IT IS NOW CALLED HARRY GWALA REGIONAL HOSPITAL

On 21 October 2021, Ms. Nomagugu Simelane, the MEC for KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health officially renamed Edendale Hospital after the South African and African National Congress anti-apartheid stalwart Mr. Harry Gwala. The hospital in the Edendale area is now called Harry Gwala Regional Hospital. Born on 30 July 1920 in New Hanover, Harry Gwala was a revolutionary leader until his passing at the age of 74 on 20 June 1995.

The renaming event was attended to by Harry Gwala's family; his political affiliates; Mr Panyaza Lusufi, Chairperson of the Harry Gwala Foundation; the MEC for KZN Health; uMsunduzi Local Municipality Mayor, Cllr MM Thebolla, general staff members and public members from Edendale and surrounding areas. Mr. Lusufi emphasized that Mr. Gwala was known for his selfless fight against the rules and oppression of apartheid. To match his passion and commitment, the hospital, its management, and all staff members must ensure the provision of quality health care and ensure equal access for all who need it.

Harry Gwala hospital was built in the year 1951 and saw its first patient in 1954.

Ms. Simelane mentioned that there were a few maintenance projects planned for the old buildings of the aged hospital and there are still more to be included.

Upcoming projects include

- renovations to nurses' residence
- building of new maternity complex
- and others

Harry Gwala has a history with Edendale hospital as he once worked at the hospital when he stayed in Pietermaritzburg.



Pic 1: MEC Simelane unveiled a portrait of the Late Harry Gwala that she personally bought as a gift to the hospital.

Pic 2: Some of the attendants included different generations of the Gwala Family



PUBLIC SERVANTS ENCOURAGED TO VACCINATE

LAUNCH OF A POP-UP SITE AT PIETERMARITZBURG NATALIA BUILDING

On 11 October 2021, a Pop-up Covid-19 vaccination site was launched in the city of Pietermaritzburg at Natalia Building. This was launched by the office of the Premier in collaboration with the Department of Health to focus on vaccinating all public servants who had not yet vaccinated. Natalia Building is well-known in Pietermaritzburg as it is where most government departments are located. These departments include DOH, COGTA, Treasury; the Office of the Premier, and other government departments are nearby.

The Head of Health for the Department of Health, Dr. S Tshabalala, and Director General for the Office of the Premier, Dr. N.O Mkhize were present to lead the proceedings. Other dignitaries who were also present, received their Covid-19 jabs.

The vaccination site was initially aimed to just be opened for 2 weeks to accommodate employees but it ended up opening up to date. The demand was high amongst Public Servants but even higher for ordinary citizens.

It is good to say not only does the site benefit Public Servants, but it also benefits the general public. The site is popular because it is located where people are. It is near a busy public transport rank, in the well-known Langalibalele Street, and is within the town of Pietermaritzburg. It was easy and quick for a person to get their jab while in town.

One thing that the Covid-19 vaccination campaign has taught the management teams at the District office and the facility level is that people like to get their health services in as easily and as conveniently as possible. We must all plan and focus on this when it comes to health services.



The Covid-19 vaccination Pop-up site at Natalia Building was initially aimed to vaccinate employees but ended up being amongst the most popular and most utilised by the public



CALLING CITIZENS TO BECOME VOOMA VAX CHAMPS

LET US EDUCATE ONE ANOTHER ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF VACCINATING



Provinces, districts, and local offices are encouraged to come up with Vax Champs campaigns and encouraged their citizens to take part.

A Vax Champ can be anyone who may be known in their community like a family member, a faith

leader, a business person, a work colleague, a neighbour, a traditional leader, a traditional healer, or someone from church who can explain the medical evidence and persuade people to do the right thing.

Negative social media stories surrounding vaccination have hampered the success of the vaccination programme. Almost every one of adult age, even children now know that they must vaccinate against covid-19, the only issue is that people are concerned about getting vaccinated because of what they have heard either on social media or from others.

Vax Champs are asked to do three things:

1. Educate themselves about Covid & vaccines
2. Promote vaccination to friends, family, and neighbours (in social media and real-life)
3. Report issues and problems with vaccination in their area so it can be improved

The Department of Health will offer support and advice so that only accurate and correct information is shared.

You can join Vax Champs through WhatsApp, a website, and Moya (data-free), and people without smartphones can join by calling the National Covid Hotline.

To become a Vax Champ

- Visit www.vaxchamp.org.za
- Use the NDOH Covid WhatsApp system 060 012 3456
- Call the National Covid Hotline 0800 029 999

Contact the District Senior Communications Practitioner, Miss Thobile Hadebe on 033 897 1072 or *Contact the District Senior Communications Practitioner, Miss Thobile Hadebe on 033 897 1072 or thobile.hadebe@kznhealth.gov.za for more information.*

On 12 November 2021, the National Department of Health launched the Vax Champs campaign and invited everyone living in South Africa to become an ambassador for vaccinating against Covid-19. The Vax Champs will encourage their friends, family, and neighbours to vaccinate.

South Africa aims to vaccinate at least 70% of the total population to control the Covid-19 pandemic. Vaccinating is currently the only way to reduce severe illnesses and death related to Covid-19.

Unfortunately, this target was not reached by the initial deadline, 25 December 2021.

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KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE
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KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health

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**GROWING
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MEC OF KZN HEALTH ENCOURAGES LOCALS TO BE PART OF THEIR LOCAL HEALTH PROGRAMMES BY BECOMING CLINIC COMMITTEE MEMBERS

In December 2022, the office of the KZN Health MEC, Ms. Nomagugu Simelane published an advertorial for Community Health Centre/Clinic committee membership. All clinics in uMgungundlovu District, including 3 Gateway Clinics, 3 Community Health Centres, and 47 Primary Health Care clinics had adverts of at least 9 committee members per clinic.

All community members are encouraged to apply to be members at their nearest facility so they can be part of their local health structure. This is a governance structure that is very important to both government and the community as it deals with their health.

This is a formal, legislated structure intended to enable the community to participate in the health system. They are responsible for monitoring health initiatives of that particular facility and creating problem-solving dialogue on the health challenges of the local community.

Minimum duties include

- Support the facility management with decisions, and the design of policy and strategy
- Provide advisory and technical support
- Oversight and governance on customer care
- Advice of finance and expenditure reviews
- Support Human Resources issues
- Strengthen community participation
- Provide advocacy for both communities and the CHC/clinic
- Mobilise for sponsorship in line with relevant legislation and prescript

Every person above the age of 18 years can apply. They must be of good standing in the community and live in the jurisdiction of the particular CHC/clinic.

The district office and health facilities are looking forward to working with the community in improving the health status of local citizens.



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NGOs CAME TO HELP WITH COMMUNITY EDUCATION RELATED TO COVID-19 VACCINATION

The Department of Health is working with Non-Governmental Organisations to assist with the education of the general public, especially in hard-to-reach areas when it comes to the Covid-19 pandemic and vaccination. The aim is to get as many people as possible to be vaccinated for Covid-19.

At the beginning of October 2021, an NGO by the name of NGC was contracted to assist with education at the community level hence increasing the vaccine uptake in the identified areas. In uMgungundlovu, the selected areas that needed the help of the NGO were uMkhambathini Municipality, uMshwati Municipality, and uMsunduzi Municipality.

In November 2021, Covid-19 Communicator, Mrs. Nontuthuko Makhaye was also contracted to join the district. Both the NGO and the Communicator worked within the district to operationalise strategies to increase the uptake of the vaccination. Everyone worked together on different activities including Vooma

Weekend activities. For the Vooma weekend that took place on 3-5 December 2021, the NGO Community Media Trust (CMT) came up with an initiative named Zwakala. They focused at the Pata/Dambuza area and created lots of awareness working together with community leaders and volunteers from the area. Quite a number of people were vaccinated from Friday 3 December— Sunday 5 December.

The department and district need more NGOs and community organisations to come on board and assist in spreading the word.



PIC 1: The Zwakala initiative offered one-on-one education, grocery vouchers, worked with locals to increase demand.

PIC 2: Unvaccinated Senior Citizen getting a lecture from the District PRO and Covid Communicator

PIC 3: Community education and interaction at Zondi Store hall



PRINCE NHLANGANISO ZULU, SON OF THE LATE KING OF THE ZULU NATION ENCOURAGED MORE TO GET VACCINATED AFTER RECEIVING HIS JOB

On 3 December 2021, the son of the late King of the Zulu Nation, King Goodwill Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu got his Covid-19 vaccine for the first time. Prince Nhlanganiso Zulu visited the Royal Show Grounds vaccination site intending to receive his vaccination.

The Prince is also an ambassador for the department's TB, Medical Male Circumcision campaigns, and all other campaigns related to Men's health. He is responsible for encouraging young men to get medically circumcised to reduce their chances of catching HIV and the chances of causing their female sexual partners to get cervical cancer.

Prince Nhlanganiso also educates about TB and is a TB survivor who knows exactly how the disease almost killed him many years ago. He is also a great leader in the province's Men's Health initiative which encourages all men or males to take better care of their health and a vocal advocate against Gender Based Violence. The Prince admitted that he was afraid to get vaccinated against Covid-19 due to the information he has been hearing on all public platforms, especially the negative information. He also admitted he does not like needles.

Prince Nhlanganiso mentioned that he decided to get vaccinated as he could see that he had a busy schedule, traveling around the province and the country. Getting vaccinated was the right thing to do.

He received his vaccine without any problems. Afterward, he was happy to have done it, and confirm to have not had or felt any pain. He encouraged everyone, especially males to get vaccinated. He concluded by saying "if we all vaccinate, we can fight this pandemic and try to get our country back to normal".



PIC 1: Prince Nhlanganiso Zulu getting registered to get his covid-19 vaccine.

PIC 2: the Prince getting his vaccine, he admitted he was afraid and doubtful at first to get his vaccine.

GET VACCINATED COMMUNITY OUTREACH ACTIVITIES



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COVID-19 AWARENESS

COVID-19 community education and awareness activities were conducted around the district since the start of the pandemic. In the past three months, the awareness continued in various ways. Door-to-door consultations, radio slots, education at taxi ranks, schools, churches and more have taken place. This is a picture gallery to share just a few...

PIC 1: Door-to-door consultation and loud hailing at Pata area

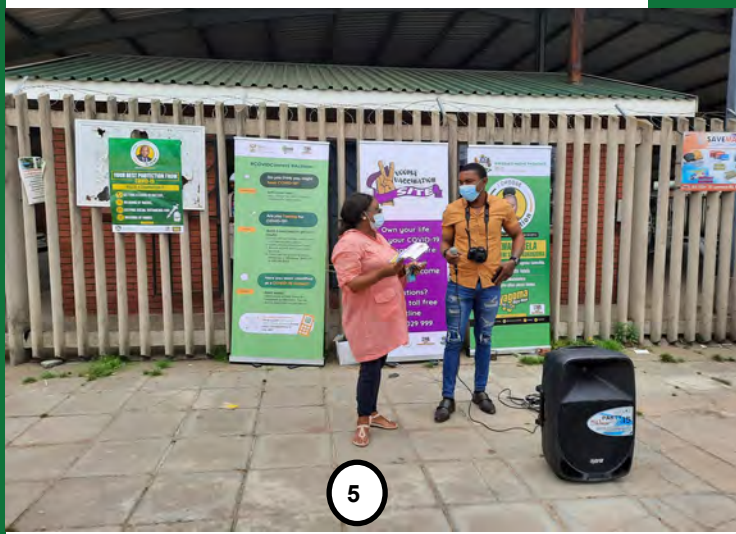
PIC 2: Door-to-door visits at Landskop area

PIC 3: A meeting with different leaders who represent people from other African countries who reside in the Pietermaritzburg area

PIC 4: Radio interview on uMgungundlovu FM

Pic 5: Awareness and activation at Mooi River taxi rank

Pic 6: One of the community Pop up sites at Dambuza area



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WORLD AIDS DAY COMMEMORATION

World AIDS day is a day commemorated worldwide every year on the 1st of December since the 80s.

It is dedicated to raising awareness of the AIDS pandemic caused by the spread of HIV infection whilst mourning those who have died of the disease.

The government, international and local organisations are doing a lot to help with preventing further people from being infected with HIV. What is also important is that those who are already infected by the virus must be supported and receive medication to control the disease and prevent unnecessary deaths.

The prevalence of the AIDS pandemic in South Africa is very high and KZN is amongst the provinces with the highest numbers of infected individuals in the country. There is still however more work left to be done to reduce the prevalence of the virus by the Department of Health, other Public Service departments, NGOs, Community Leaders and the community in the general.



The world AIDS day commemoration in Richmond, Magoda area started with a peaceful March against Gender Based Violence where women were encouraged to speak out against being violated

For these reasons, uMgungundlovu District led by the office of the district's Operation Sukuma Sakhe (OSS) Champion, MEC for COGTA, Mr. Ravi Pillay held an AIDS awareness event on 1 December 2021 at Magoda area in Richmond Sub-District. MEC Pillay together with other influential people, political dignitaries made sure that the attendants received the message. MEC Pillay indicated plans in the pipeline for the development of Richmond Local Municipality. Departments, NGOs, and District supporting

partners shared information on services available to the people of Richmond that could help curb HIV infections. A range of services were made available at the site including Covid 19 testing and vaccination. Attendants were asked to play their part in assisting with the reduction of new infections and ensuring the uptake of medication for those who are already infected. A strong message against Gender-Based Violence was shared and strengthened with a march against the problematic actions of physically, emotionally, and financially displaying violence based on gender.



CALLING ALL THOSE ELLIGIBLE TO GET THEIR COVID-19 VACCINE BOOSTER DOSES

In November 2021, the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA) approved the administration of Covid-19 vaccine booster doses for Health Care workers who participated in the Sisonke study when the vaccines were first introduced in South Africa. Health care workers from uMgungundlovu District were receiving their booster doses of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine at Grey's Tertiary Hospital when the implementation first started. On 23 December 2022, the Department of Health announced the details of the implementation of booster doses for the COVID-19 vaccines in use in the country for all citizens who have received either the Pfizer or Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

The regulator, SAHPRA approved the use of the Pfizer vaccine as a booster of the primary Pfizer vaccine two dose series some time ago. This approval is for the vaccination of people six months after the administration of the second

dose (or in the case of immunocompromised people who receive an additional primary dose, after their third dose).

From 24th December 2021, J&J booster vaccinations were to be provided to anyone who received their last dose at least 2 months prior. The recommended interval is after 2 months but preferably before 6 months from the primary dose. From 28th December 2021, Pfizer booster vaccinations can

be provided to anyone who received their last dose at least 6 months since the second primary dose.

Booster doses are the same vaccine in the same dose administered to people who have had a primary vaccination series and are administered to allow the body to boost its immunity to the COVID-19 virus.

Visit your nearest vaccination site to get your Covid-19 booster doses.



Dr. M.T Zulu, uMgungundlovu District Director getting her booster dose at Grey's Hospital.



COMING UPHPV VACCINATION CAMPAIGN FOR GRADE 4 GIRLS TO HELP REDUCE CHANCES OF GETTING CERVICAL

In South Africa, the school-based national Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination program was introduced in 2014, targeting girls aged nine years or older (mostly in grade-5).

This program is an initiative by the Department of Health and is aimed at improving the health of women. From 14 February until 25 March, the district will be doing an HPV vaccination campaign at more than 200 schools. HPV is the virus that causes cervical cancer. Cervical cancer is the second most prevalent cancer among women after breast cancer. Over 99% of all cervical cancers are caused by persistent infection of high-risk types of HPV.

Cervical cancer is a major silent killer in adult women. Getting the vaccination will assist in reduction of getting this type of cancer at an adult stage.

Why is the HPV vaccination necessary?

The vaccination protects girls from being infected by HPV and reduces the risk of developing HPV related cervical cancer later in life.

The younger your daughter is, the better her body's immune system can respond to the vaccine, resulting in the production of protective antibodies against the virus.

How many doses?

To provide the best protection against the HPV, 2 doses of the vaccine need to be administered. What is required from the parent and or caregiver?

A signed consent form allowing the child to receive HPV vaccination

No signed consent form, no vaccination

If the signed consent form has not been returned to the school, your daughter will not be vaccinated.

How much to get the vaccination?

The vaccination is free. You can contact your daughter's school if you haven't received a consent form yet and find out when the health professionals will be at the

school to administer the vaccinations.

Deworming programme also included

The teams will also be conducting a deworming programme together with the HPV campaign. The programme provides deworming for children who are at school from grade 1 up to grade 7.



Source: Department of Health South Africa
A nurse administering HPV vaccination

THE IEC ENCOURAGED VOTERS TO VACCINATE DURING THE NATIONAL LOCAL ELECTIONS CAMPAIGN



Former CDC Manager Mrs Bathe Mukwena during a media conference organised by uMgungundlovu District Municipality explaining the Covid-19 protocols to be followed at voting stations and encouraging voters to vaccinate.

South African Municipal Elections were held on 1 November 2021. The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) of South Africa worked with related stakeholders including the Department of Health to encourage citizens to get vaccinated. The Department of Health was allowed to set up pop-up vaccination sites outside voting stations to allow an

opportunity for people to get vaccinated during election day.

On 28 October 2021, uMgungundlovu District Municipality held a media conference where citizens were informed and educated on what could be expected during the election day. Although it was clear that vaccinating was for those who were willing, people

were encouraged to utilise the service.

All voting stations met the guidelines to prevent making them super-spreader events. The measures worked because the number of infections did not drastically go up after the elections.

IMPROVE YOUR CUSTOMER CARE

This year let us make small but positive changes in the manner we provide service to our beloved clients. As public servants we exist because we are required to provide service to the public. These small changes will make a big difference to your life and the life of others.

- Inform yourself— learn about your facility and its vision, inform yourself about your department and in general the things that are affecting your work.
- Maintain a positive attitude—leave the negative attitude at home and present a positive one at work!
- Put your arrogance and self-absorption aside—The client does not care about your educational levels or social status. They just need to get good service, at the shortest time possible and leave.
- Listen to understand, not to just respond
- Respond quickly to a problem and solve it as soon as possible but do not argue
- Watch your language! Use appropriate language at work
- Help the client to help themselves. A person's health does not only depend on you as a health care provider but on them taking care of themselves as well. Help each person/client see this
- Keep your word. If you promised to call back, do that
- Be punctual—nobody wants to be delayed for no reason
- Always dress and look professional, clean, and appropriate
- Don't forget to smile—it costs nothing. It is contagious and can elevate the mood in the workplace.

Finally, the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you—Treat other people with the concern and kindness you would like them to show toward you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS


uMgungundlovu District

SWITCHBOARD: (033) 897 1000

EMAIL ADDRESS:
Thobile.hadebe@kznhealth.gov.za

KEEP IN TOUCH ...

Physical Address: 171 Hoosen Haffajee (former Berg) Street, Pietermaritzburg

Postal Address: Private bag X9124,
Pietermaritzburg, 3200

Web Address:
<http://www.kznhealth.gov.za/>



Compiled by
Miss Thobile Hadebe
Senior Communications Practitioner

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