

MEC MANOPOLE URGE COMMUNITIES NOT TO PANIC, DESPITE THE INCREASE OF COVID-19 CONFIRMED CASES TO 13 IN THE NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE

To: All Media Institutions

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Following yesterday's announcement by the Minister of Health regarding the increase of COVID-19 confirmed cases to 1845 in the country, the Northern Cape MEC for Health, Ms Mase Manopole, once more wishes to allay fears of community members not to panic and urges them to adhere to restrictions imposed during the lockdown period. These drastic steps, if we all adhere to them, will definitely bear fruit by disrupting transmission and flattening the curve.

MEC Manopole highlights that all known COVID-19 positive cases in the Province are in a stable condition and under self-quarantine. There are nine patients in Frances Baard, one in Pixley ka Seme, one in ZF Mgcau and two in Namaqua. The MEC is pleased to report that there have been no deaths in the province, and that two of the patients have fully recovered and are no longer infectious. She appreciates the swift response of the District Outreach Response Teams for successfully tracing their immediate contacts and agreeing with them to adhere to screening and testing.

In addition to the 500 contact tracers committed by the Department, the MEC has reached agreement with mining houses in the John Taolo Gaetsewe District, to provide an additional 300 people for contact tracing.

The Districts Outreach Response teams have embarked on a rigorous door-to-door screening campaign in communities, and will continue for the entire duration of the lockdown period. Since Monday to date, over 1600 people were screened for COVID-19 in the Phokwane Municipality, as it is the epicentre with 8 confirmed cases.

MEC Manopole is scheduled to visit the other districts with the Acting Head of Department, starting with John Taolo Gaetsewe District on Tuesday, 14th April, as part of rolling out the mass screening campaign, motivating the workforce on the ground as well as handing over sanitisers to families during the door to door visits.

MEC Manopole expresses her appreciation to all those who heeded to the President's call to stay at homes. She urges everyone to continue exercising precautionary measures, including washing of hands for a minimum of 20 seconds at least every 30 minutes, avoid touching their face after coughing or sneezing, and maintaining social distancing of 2 metres from each other.

Despite the limited stock of flu vaccines across the country, especially as the winter season looms, Northern Cape has sufficient stock in place to administer to the elderly, those with other illnesses as well as to health care staff. The MEC welcomed

the announcement by the Minister of Health that South Africa will participate in the Public Health Emergency Solidarity Trial that has been initiated by the World Health Organisation to conduct a clinical trial to find effective treatment for COVID-19. Having a successful vaccine will be of great benefit to all our people.

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