



health

Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



MEDIA STATEMENT

To: Editors & Health Journalists

Issued by: Department of Health

Date: Monday, 07 November 2022

Health Minister Phaahla to attend SADC Health Summit

Pretoria: Minister of Health, Dr Joe Phaahla will this week, join other Ministers of Health in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) during the summit for health ministers to review the progress made to address the burden of communicable and non-communicable diseases, and also share best practices and drive collective action to deliver better health for people across the region.

The 2022 hybrid summit is taking between 7 – 11 November in Kinshasa, the Democratic Republic of Congo and will serve as a platform for health ministers in the region to report on the progress made with regards to the implementation of the regional health agenda to strengthen collective malaria elimination in the region and to decrease morbidity and mortality due to malaria disease.

The meeting takes place during an annual SADC Malaria week which takes place under the banner of Elimination Eight Initiative (E8), a coalition of eight countries working across national borders to eliminate malaria in southern Africa by 2030.

The SADC Malaria week takes place every year in November, and is dedicated to commemorate and create awareness about malaria and mobilise the communities to participate in the malaria control programmes. This also serves as a platform and opportunity to intensify public education about the burden of other public health challenges issues such as HIV/AIDS, TB, Obesity and COVID-19 in the region.

Minister Phaahla will, in his capacity as current Chairperson of the SADC Malaria Elimination, appraise the meeting on the progress of the E8 Initiative, including the successful roll out of the new USD14 Million Global Fund Grant for the period of 2021 – 2024.

Malaria is one of the most severe public health challenges across the world, it is a life-threatening disease caused by parasites that are transmitted to people through the bites of infected female mosquitoes. It is also one of the leading causes of deaths in many developing countries.

Young children, pregnant women and non-immune travellers from malaria-free areas are more vulnerable to the disease when they become infected. Although, malaria is preventable and curable, people who experience malaria symptoms (such as fever, headache, muscle aches, tiredness, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, etc.), are urged to immediately visit their nearest healthcare provider.

These symptoms may develop 10 -14 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito. Even if you have taken chemoprophylaxis, you can still contract the disease.

According to the 2021 World Malaria Report, almost half the world's population live in areas at risk of malaria transmission in 87 countries and territories. In 2020 alone, malaria caused an estimated 241 million clinical episodes and 627 000 deaths. About 95% of deaths in the same period, were recorded in the WHO African Region.

In South Africa, malaria risk is present throughout the year, but highest from between September to May the following year, and it is endemic in areas such as North-Eastern KwaZulu-Natal, parts of Mpumalanga and Limpopo Provinces.

Some of malaria preventative methods include; closing windows and doors during the sunset; using mosquito repellent on exposed skin; spraying room with an aerosol insecticide/mosquito coils; wearing long-sleeved clothing and sleeping under a net.

For more information and media enquiries, please contact:

Foster Mohale Departmental spokesperson National Health Department Cell: 072 4323792 Foster.mohale@health.gov.za	Doctor Tshwale Health Minister Spokesperson National Health Department Cell: 063 657 8487 Doctor.tshwale@health.gov.za
---	--