



health

Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



MEDIA STATEMENT

To: Editors & Health Journalists
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Update on the response to Cholera Outbreak in South Africa

Pretoria: The Department of Health, working with various stakeholders continue to make a significant progress in response to cholera outbreak in some parts of the country to contain the spread of the disease and save lives, while the investigations into the cause of the outbreaks are ongoing.

The National, Provincial and District Outbreak response Teams have been activated and managed reached over 300 contacts as part of case finding and contact tracing activities which include health promotion and continuous distribution of 3000 hygiene packs donated by UNICEF and Doctors Without Borders to households and local schools in the affected communities.

So far, more than 600 people with suspected cholera symptoms have been seen in Gauteng and Free State hospitals.

The setting-up of well-equipped temporary field health facility (Kanana Cholera Treatment Centre) which is the epicenter in Hammanskraal, has not only relieved pressure at Jubilee hospital, but also contributed to improved health seeking behaviour amongst community members with suspected to cholera symptoms.

Over 200 people have been seen at this makeshift hospital. The facility has been operating 24/7 since 26 May.

With regards to positive cases, the country has recorded a total cumulative number of 166 laboratory-confirmed cases and 202 suspected cases of cholera in five provinces between 1 February and 06 June 2023. Majority of cases were recorded in Gauteng which accounts for at least 92% or 152 cases, while Free State Province accounts for 5% which translates into 9 cases. Other provinces which recorded positive cases include Limpopo (1), Mpumalanga (1) and North West (3).

Majority of these cases were diagnosed at public laboratories. The ages of patients in Gauteng range from 1 year to 91 years, while in Free State ranges from 10 to 50 years.

With regards to mortality rate, the death toll stands at 31, and Gauteng accounts for 29 deaths, Free State and Mpumalanga account for one death each. The Department of Social Development continues with psychosocial support and social relief packages to the families of the deceased.

Members of the public are urged to remain vigilant and avoid known or suspected contaminated food, water and surfaces, and wash hands thoroughly with soap before handling and preparing food or after using the bathroom to prevent possible infection. Never drink water from unsafe sources such as rivers, dams, streams, unless boiled or disinfected first.

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