

MEDIA ADVISORY

To: Editors & Health Journalists
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African Vaccination Week commemoration: Encouraging families to vaccinate against preventable illnesses

Pretoria: Minister of Health, Dr Joe Phaahla together with the MEC for Health in the North West province, Mr Madoda Sambatha, will tomorrow (Tuesday, 30 April) lead the African Vaccination Week (AVW) commemorative event, a pivotal occasion to mark the 50th Anniversary of Expanded Programme of Immunisation (EPI); its impact on saving lives, and catalyze renewed efforts to strengthen routine immunisation initiatives to prevent avoidable child deaths from childhood diseases.

The African Vaccination Week is observed annually in the African Region to increase awareness of the importance of every person's need and right (particularly every child and woman) to be protected from vaccine-preventable diseases. The campaign also aims at keeping immunisation high on the national and regional agendas through advocacy and partnerships.

The 2024 campaign will be commemorated under the theme "***The Big Catch Up! Vaccinated Population - Healthy Population,***" which highlights the value of immunisation in preventing infectious vaccine-preventable diseases and safeguarding the health of communities.

The commemoration also coincides with the 10th anniversary of the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) campaign launched in 2014 to vaccinate young girls at the age of 9 years to prevent cervical cancer. Cervical cancer is the second most common cancer after breast cancer, and the leading cause of cancer deaths among women in South Africa. The government has administered over 6 million doses of life-saving vaccine amongst young girls since April 2014 to date.

Minister Phaahla and MEC Sambatha will be joined by local government and traditional leaders, representatives from stakeholders in the sector including UNICEF, World Health Organization and civil society organisations promoting the access to treatment and vaccine to improve health status through the prevention of diseases and the promotion of healthy lifestyles.

Members of the media are invited to attend the event schedule as follows:

Date: Tuesday, 30 April 2024

Time: 09:00

Venue: Hebron Village Itsoseng Sports ground, Madibeng Local Municipality – North West Province.

For more information and media enquiries, please contact:

Foster Mohale
National Department of Health Spokesperson
072 432 3792
Foster.mohale@health.gov.za

Doctor Tshwale
Minister of Health's Spokesperson
063 657 8487
Doctor.tshwale@health.gov.za

Tebogo Lekgethwane
North West Department of Health Spokesperson
067 422 7763
tlekgethwane@nwpg.gov.za