

MEDIA ADVISORY

To: Editors & Health Journalists
Issued by: Department of Health
Date: Friday, 28 August 2026

Deputy Minister Phaahla to lead African Traditional Medicine Commemoration

Nelspruit: The Deputy Minister of Health, Dr Joe Phaahla, will on Monday, 31 August, lead the African Traditional Medicine Commemorative Day in Mpumalanga. The event aims to raise awareness about the vital role that indigenous healing practices and herbal medicine play in healthcare across the African continent.

The World Health Organization recognises the significance of traditional medicine and advocates for its integration into formal health systems to enhance healthcare accessibility and efficacy. African Traditional Medicine Day is commemorated annually on the last day of August to recognise the vital role that traditional healing practices play in community healthcare.

South Africa has been commemorating African Traditional Medicine Day since 2003, in line with the resolution adopted by African ministers of health in 2002 during the 50th session of the WHO Regional Committee for Africa in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

Deputy Minister Phaahla will be joined by the World Health Organization Country Representative in South Africa, Shenaaz El-Halabi; the Mpumalanga Health MEC, Ms Sasekani Manzini; and other provincial Health MECs. Over 800 traditional health practitioners and their associations are expected to attend the event.

This year's event will be celebrated under the theme: ***"Reflection on Research and Development Efforts of Traditional Medicine Towards Achieving Universal Health Coverage in the African Region"***. The theme highlights the urgent need to scientifically validate, regulate, and integrate indigenous remedies into mainstream healthcare to make medical services accessible and affordable for all.

Details of the event held as follows:

Date: Monday, 31 August 2026
Venue: Kamhlushwa Stadium, Ehlanzeni District Municipality, Mbombela
Time: 09h00

For RSVP please contact: Tlou Tlhako: tlou.tlhako@health.gov.za

For more information and media enquiries, please contact:

Mr Foster Mohale Departmental Spokesperson National Health Department Mobile: 0724323792 Foster.mohale@health.gov.za	Mr Dumisani Malamule Departmental Spokesperson Mpumalanga Department of Health Mobile: 071 524 7136 DumisaniMala@mpuhealth.gov.za
---	--