

MEDIA STATEMENT

To: Editors & Health Journalists
Issued by: Department of Health
Date: Thursday, 01 October 2026

Health Department welcomes new Director-General, Dr Thembisile Xulu

Pretoria: The Department of Health today welcomes Dr Xulu as she officially assumes the position of Director-General, following her appointment by cabinet in August 2026.

A medical doctor by profession, Dr Xulu brings substantial experience in health systems leadership. She previously served as Chief Executive Officer of the South African National AIDS Council (SANAC) and spent more than 15 years with the Right to Care (RTC) Group, where she held several senior positions, including Manager of the HIV Expert Treatment Programme and Executive Director of the Group.

In her new capacity, Dr Xulu will lead the implementation of key national health priorities, including infrastructure, the rollout of the National Health Insurance (NHI), the strengthening of primary healthcare services, and the continued advancement of HIV, tuberculosis, and maternal and child health programmes. The Department expresses its confidence in her leadership to drive equitable, quality healthcare for all South Africans.

The Department also extends its appreciation to Prof Nicolas Crisp, Deputy Director General responsible for National Health Insurance, for his exemplary service and leadership as Acting Director-General since March 2026.

For more information and media enquiries, please contact:

Mr Foster Mohale
Departmental Spokesperson
0724323792
Foster.mohale@health.gov.za

Mr Sello Lediga
Health Ministry Spokesperson
0823539859
Sello.Lediga@health.gov.za