

Umdlavuzwa Cervical Cancer Awareness Campaign notes for Mayor Zandile Gumede at Chief Albert Luthuli on 21 April 2018

Programme Director – Penny Msimango,

MEC, Dr Sbongiseni Dhlomo,

HOD, Dr Musa Gumede,

Hospital Management,

CANSA – Ms Noble,

UKZN – Prof T Sebitloane,

Stakeholders,

Amakhosi,

Amakhansela,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank the MEC and the department for organising this critical event. The cervical cancer awareness and screening campaign must not be limited to the month of September. We need to get the message out there; Cervical Cancer is curable.

Cervical cancer affects roughly one in 41 South African women, and Statistics South Africa estimates that 16.84-million women over the age of 15 are at risk of the disease in this country. At present, roughly eight South African women die from the disease every day, and the World Health Organisation (WHO) predicts that this figure could rise to 12 by 2025.

We also welcome the big step taken by the department to purchase 15 new cervical cancer machines at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli Hospital. This is a wonderful news for the province, region and women in general.

Cervical cancer kills 4000 women per year in South Africa. That is almost 11 women per day or 333 per month! The sad part is that with early detection, treatment is possible and success rates are good.

MEC you have urged parents, guardians to fight this scourge by going for the pap smear. You have stated that the basic components of cervical cancer control are primary prevention, early detection, screening programmes and diagnosis and treatment.

As eThekweni Municipality we couldn't agree more. It is a shocking statistic that only 30% of all cancer deaths are not avoidable. The rest is due to our poor choices:

- Poor diet - consisting of mainly processed foods, high in saturated fat lack of veggies and fruits.
- No exercise – we are living a sedentary lifestyle more and more.
- Substance abuse – smoking and excessive alcohol intake

Ladies and Gentlemen all of these are within our control. It goes without saying that we have to watch what we eat. We are, after all, what we eat. We have to reduce sugar and salt in our diet.

We need to eat less but frequently. We need to eat less fried foods but go for boiled or raw especially vegetables and fruits. The list goes on and on.

We have to get up from couches and start doing light exercises. This is in order that our bodies are active. Active bodies mean the immune system is active and it is working hard to get rid of bad things that attack our bodies like cancer and others.

Together we can defeat Cancer, I thank you. You are all welcome