



PREMIER CONVENES PROVINCIAL COUNCIL ON AIDS (PCA)

12 March 2020

The Premier of the Free State, Sisi Ntombela, convened an ordinary quarterly sitting of the Provincial Council on Aids (PCA), in Bloemfontein, on 11 March 2020, to assess the functionality of the structure, deliberate on various reports from Municipalities and various structures, and provide strategic direction for the year ahead.

The meeting was attended by Dr. Sandile Buthelezi, who presented a consolidated report and update on Aids Councils in the country, with emphasis on the strategic role and functionality of the Free State PCA.

The multi-sectoral council, also attended by Members of the Executive Council (MECs) as well as Mayors and senior officials from the Provincial Department of Health and strategic partners from civil society, deliberated on an implementation plan based on an approach that is in line with the strategic approach of focus for impact, as advocated in the National Strategic Plan on HIV, TB and STIs 2017-2022.

In striving for alignment with focus for impact, the PCA adopted to prioritize seven (7) identified key areas by carefully ensuring that efforts are intensified in Municipalities, targeting most affected populations, while strengthening implementation of interventions and actions that yield results faster or yield greater impact.

In the interest of sustaining and monitoring progress, the adopted action plan will become a standing item of the quarterly PCA, which obtains reports from departments, civil society organisations, partners, business sector and Municipalities, in the 7 key areas, which are:

1. New HIV infections, with emphasis on adolescents;
2. Risk behaviours leading to HIV, TB and STIs increase;
3. Drugs as a gateway to HIV, TB, and STIs;
4. Human trafficking;
5. Men excluding themselves from health seeking and health promoting behaviours to the detriment and increase in vulnerability of women and children;
6. Public funds expenditure on HIV and TB treatment; and,
7. Mental health and other chronic non-communicable diseases that are on the rise, placing increased burden on public healthcare resources and potentially compromising workplace productivity and impact HIV and TB treatment outcomes.

The Premier has called upon all government departments and institutions, civil society organisations, private sector businesses and partners, to support the PCA and its programmes.

The Premier further called upon District and Local Municipality Mayors in particular, to ensure that they have fully functional Aids Councils.

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