



health

Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



MEDIA STATEMENT

To: Editors & Health Journalists

Issued by: Department of Health

Date: Tuesday, 19 April 2022

Health Minister constitutes Team for KZN floods

Pretoria: Minister of Health, Dr Joe Phaahla has today constituted a Health Team of National and Provincial Departments officials to urgently conduct an impact assessment of the floods on health service delivery in KwaZulu-Natal, together with the costs to repair the damages to submit to the National Treasury for funding consideration.

This follows a site-visit by Minister Phaahla, accompanied by the Deputy Minister, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo and KwaZulu-Natal for Health, Ms Nomagugu Simelane to various flood-damaged health facilities around eThekweni District on Tuesday.

According to the preliminary costs of the damages, it is estimated at over R187 000 000.00 to repair the health infrastructure, which include 23 Hospitals, 34 clinics, 3 Community Health Centres and 5 office buildings.

There has been a huge damage on infrastructure which negatively impacts general health service delivery in six affected districts of eThekweni, Ugu, Ilembe, uMgungudlovu, King Cetshwayo and uMkhanyakude

Departmental experts who include the Engineers, Architects, Quantity Surveyors and Construction Managers have classified the damage to health infrastructure as moderate compared to the damages experienced in October 2017 in eThekweni. Most damages manifest in the form of weakened roof coverings, failed waterproofing membranes causing water ingress, embankments and retaining wall failures.

The damages that would require capital expenditure to replace the entire roof coverings and embankment re-stabilisation are in Newtown Community Health Centre, Wentworth Regional Hospital, GJ Crookes Hospital and Justice Gizenga Mpanza Regional Hospital.

In addition, the Pathology Forensic Team has completed 377 post-mortems of the 455 bodies recovered and is left with close to 50 bodies which would be finalised tomorrow. The Department calls on families and communities to collect the remains for burial, and in case of indigent families they may contact the Provincial Government for assistance.

Minister visited the Prince Mshiyeni Memorial Hospital in Umlazi to inspect the challenge of water supply as a result of the floods. However, work is proceeding to fill the reservoir through water tankering as they have ran out of stored water and are not being supplied through the ordinary water pipe supply. This is done with support of ABSA Bank which has donated 20 water tanks to assist communities.

This has an effect to the proper functioning of the hospital with effect on many surgical processes to be performed in the hospital. It is estimated with work being done by engineers that by tomorrow midday water supply will be normalized.

In Newtown Health Centre, it was found that the facility was ransacked by water and its services have come to a total halt. The delegation committed to restore services through deployment of mobile facilities to ensure community access whilst feasibility on the integrity of the structure is been conducted by structural engineers.

Minister also visited the Amaoti Community Hall where displaced people have settled to inspect work to supply people with necessary chronic medicine. The provincial department has further made commitment to dispatch staff into communities to ensure people have access to medicine at closer proximity.

The task team will be led by Director-General Dr Sandile Buthelezi, supported by the Provincial Head of Department for Health, Dr Sandile Tshabalala with the help of Technical Infrastructure experts.

For media enquiries, please contact:

Doctor Tshwale
MLO - Health Minister
National Health Department
Cell: 063 657 8487
Doctor.tshwale@health.gov.za

Mdu Ncalani
MLO – MEC's Office
KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health
Cell: 076 292 6535