

SPEECH FOR DEPUTY MINISTER OF HEALTH FOR THE ROTARY FAMILY HEALTH DAY EVENT ON FRIDAY, 04 October 2019 –MADISENG VILLAGE - BURGERSFORT

Programme Director:

The MEC for Health of Limpopo Dr Phophi Ramathuba

The Mayor of Feta Kgomo Tubatse Municipality: Councillor R S Mamekoa

Ms Steve Letsike: Co-Chairperson of SANAC

Ms Sue Paget: CEO of Rotary for Family Health

Mme Kgoshigadi Riba

The Rotary leadership and sponsors of this event

Representative from Gift of the Givers Mr Sayed

Our development and implementing partners

Officials of the national and provincial Departments of Health

Members of the local community

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning!

Dumelang !

Today marks the beginning of the 6th annual Rotary Family Health Days' outreach programme, and I am very pleased to re-launch this programme for 2019. Rotary Family Health Day's programme aims to promote peace, fight disease, promote hygiene and save mothers and children. These health days create an opportunity to interact directly with individuals, families and community members in a more relaxed environment. Based on the complexity to the programme, it will extend for the next three days starting today.

Allow me Programme Director to elaborate on the government efforts to support the aims of the rotary programme.

Let me focus on the challenges of the quadruple burden of the diseases which are HIV and STI, TB, NCD (with special focus on Diabetes, Hypertension and mental health) and trauma (mainly related to violence following the consumption of alcohol). I further challenge you to support South Africa to break the cycle of HIV and STIs. In today's event you are urged to access all the services available which include HIV testing, checking of blood pressure and screening and referrals for Diabetes, TB, STIs. There will also be body Mass Index measurements. You are urged to commit to giving up alcohol and smoking and start the process of healthy living, (eating food with less sugar and salt) and exercise. You are also welcomed to call your friends, neighbours and family members to also come for screening and testing because it is only through knowing your status that you can live a long and healthy life. The services will continue tomorrow and on Sunday. Those of you who once tested HIV positive and were not able to start HIV treatment for personal reasons, we urge you to

discuss with the health care worker in one of the stations so that they can refer or link you to your nearest facility.

We all know why testing for HIV is so important! Firstly, knowing one's HIV status is good so that you can take informed decisions to remain HIV negative including access to the PrEP programme if you are under substantial risk., Men who test HIV negative (if not circumcised) to be referred for medical male circumcision; if you are HIV positive will be initiated on lifelong and lifesaving HIV treatment. Everyone HIV positive or HIV negative, should use condoms at every sexual intercourse with their partners to prevent transmission and acquiring of the [virus.HIV](#) positive people have to adhere to their medication in order to stay virally suppressed, so that their risk of transmission is minimised. If you take your treatment as directed by health care worker without defaulting, you will remain virally suppressed and will not transmit the virus to your loved ones. This is what the expression (U=U) Undetected=Untransmissible means.

Consistent and correct use of male and female condoms will also prevent HIV acquisition and/or transmission, unplanned pregnancy and acquisition of STIs. Both male and female condoms, MAX and MAXIMA are available in scented and coloured varieties red strawberry, yellow banana and purple grape for male condoms and the natural one for those who prefer not to change free of charge to provide prevention options for you.

I cannot conclude my speech without talking about women and children services because one of the expertise of rotary in the global support for the eradication of Polio. South Africa is one of the countries that is recognised globally for the expanded programme of immunization which contributed to the reduction of childhood diseases such as pneumonia and diarrhoea but it was brought to my attention that Sekhukhune and Fetakgomo still have the lower number of children who are fully immunised.

We therefore made sure that the immunization services are also available. If you have any child below six years, please ensure that you bring them during these three days so that we can verify if your child did miss any immunization and will be immunised. Bring the road to health booklet with you. In addition, services such as provision of Vitamin A and de-worming are available.

A full package of services for women, which includes contraceptives, cervical and breast cancer screening and testing for pregnancy, are also available. For brothers and fathers and grandfathers who are here, we will also provide the Medical Male Circumcision (MMC) and prostate cancer screening. We know from research that men who are circumcised are less likely to contract HIV from their sexual partners (60% protection).

However, this does not render you immune to contracting HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases, hence it is recommended to consistently use condoms

correctly even in circumcised men. I challenge you to reach out and access these services here and in the upcoming 2 days as well as beyond these activations.

Other services available will include screening and referral to mental health and dental screening.

The overall target for the next three days is to reach 60 000 people. In particular, allow me to talk about 90, 90, 90 strategy for HIV and TB. This strategy requires that 90% of people who are HIV positive must know their status, 90% of those who are HIV positive must be on treatment and 90% of those on treatment must be virally suppressed by 2020.

While we are almost reaching the target of the first 90, we will need to prioritize our targeting and take the services to the people in order to achieve this target of 90%, which will then inform the second and the third 90.

In order to reach the second and the third 90 we need to strengthen our linkages to care and adherence strategies. We urge men to access these services.

Health care workers, let us also take this opportunity to develop networking between youth organizations and other community based organizations so that the partnership continues beyond the three days in order to improve access and utilization of services.

To the young people, you continually give us feedback on the barriers to accessing health services thus take this opportunity to engage with the health care workers to suggest the strategies to improve access to health care services, especially the sexual reproductive health services.

I further urge you to consistently use the services of B-Wise app that the department supports to provide information for you.

Recently, across the country we realised that there are increasing reports on gender-based violence.

We must all stand together to fight violence in our communities. We must not tolerate any acts of sexual violence or any form of violence and discrimination.

The number of interpersonal violent acts perpetrated in our communities is far too high.

This causes pain and suffering at all levels of our society, it also increases the burden on our health system and on our economy.

I call upon the community of Fetakgomo to support the initiatives by the President of the country to combat violence, protect vulnerable women and children of this country

Let's talk about our host district a bit especially relating to growing the local economies and improving the conditions of living The total district adjusted population is [1 229 286](#) of which 44% comprises the FetaKgomo-Greater Tobatse local Municipality.

The unemployment rate is at 51% which is higher than the national average of 25%.

I am aware that this district has opportunities through the availability of the mining industry and I would like to appreciate the support and co-operation of the mining industry on combating poverty.

Allow me to further call on the local entrepreneurs to engage with the established mining industry in order to improve the standard of living for our community.

To the Rotarians, we urge you to collaborate with the local community structures to invest in skills development, mentorship and financial support.

This will reduce high reliance on public sector services and increase vulnerability to communicable and non-communicable diseases alluded to earlier.

Finally, Programme director, ladies and gentlemen

As the Department of Health we value your feedback on the service we provide, we have established systems such as momConnect which marks the 5th year anniversary today.

The purpose of these services is to improve the interaction with the service users.

We appreciate the compliments we received so far and we work tirelessly to respond to the complaints that you are reporting to us. Today we have the momConnect stall in one of the screening areas to collect feedback about the service.

The feedback is critical as we are working to expand this type of service to the other services such as chronic diseases.

In conclusion, I would like to congratulate Rotarians and their partners for this initiative. I do hope that we not only meet our target of screening and testing 60 000, especially men and Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) in these three days but that we exceed this number.

I thank you for your attention!
Ke a leboga!