



LIMPOPO

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Media Statement

To All Media

09 September 2024

BILHARZIA OUTBREAK IN MOPANI DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE

The Limpopo Provincial Government has been alerted to an outbreak of the waterborne parasitic disease, Bilharzia (schistosomiasis), in several areas within the Greater Tzaneen Local Municipality, located in the Mopani District.

According to the latest reports, the Bilharzia outbreak has significantly impacted areas such as Nkowankowa, Khujwane, and Dan villages. Alarmingly, over 140 learners from Malwandla Primary School have been diagnosed and are currently receiving treatment with anti-parasitic medication. The rapid spread of this infection has raised serious concerns about health and safety in the affected communities.

In response to this outbreak, the Limpopo Provincial Government has swiftly established a provincial task team. This team includes representatives from the Office of the Premier, the Department of Health, the Department of Education, and the Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements, and Traditional Affairs (CoGHSTA), Mopani District Municipality, Greater Giyani Local Municipality, Greater Tzaneen Local Municipality, Greater Letaba Local Municipality and Ba-Phalaborwa local Municipality. The task team's mandate is to coordinate efforts to contain the outbreak, provide medical care to affected individuals, and prevent further spread of the disease.

The Limpopo Provincial Government strongly advises residents in the affected areas to refrain from swimming in rivers, streams, or any other potentially contaminated water sources, ensure that any water used for drinking is boiled or properly treated before use, and that parents and guardians are urged to closely monitor their children for any symptoms of Bilharzia and seek immediate medical attention if symptoms arise.

Acting Premier Mr. Basikopo Makamu emphasized the importance of vigilance during this time, stating, "We urge all residents in the affected areas to exercise extreme caution. Avoid direct contact with potentially contaminated water sources, and seek medical

attention if you or your loved ones exhibit any signs of illness. Our priority is to contain this outbreak and protect the health of our communities."

Bilharzia can present a range of symptoms, which include but are not limited to abdominal pain, fever and chills, bloody diarrhea, blood in urine, urine tract infections, persistent headaches, and fatigue. Should any of these symptoms appear, residents are strongly advised to visit the nearest healthcare facility for screening and treatment. Early diagnosis and intervention are crucial in managing and treating Bilharzia effectively.

The provincial government assures all residents that every effort is being made to address this health crisis. The safety and well-being of our communities remain our top priority. Regular updates will be provided as the situation develops.

For further inquiries, please contact:

Ndavhe Ramakuela

Provincial Government Spokesperson

082 200 5357

Thilivhali Muavha

Premier's Spokesperson

066 011 7034

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