

OVER 20 MILLION PEOPLE TESTED FOR HIV IN GAUTENG

By Department of health

About 22 million people were tested for HIV including pregnant women against a set target of 1.8 million in Gauteng in third quarter (October to December) of the current financial year, pronounced MEC for Health, Dr Gwen Ramokgopa during the recent health portfolio committee briefing held at Gauteng Legislature.

Dr Ramokgopa said that she is pleased with the overall third quarter performance, while calling for improved work ethic within the Department.

“The prevention of mother to child HIV transmission through vertical transmission remains a flagship success prevention programme with just under 1% positive at ten weeks through the Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test,” said Dr Ramokgopa. Although performance has improved in certain areas such as access to health facilities through provision of 24hour health care services, access to chronic medi-

cines at convenient locations, testing of clients for HIV and having a higher proportion of clinics considered to be ideal, there are areas where targets still need to be achieved are consistently not achieved. “To this end, there are various initiatives that we are implemented as part of the Recovery Plan with the focus on challenges in the system and priority areas for performance improvement, therefore, we will have to work very hard towards the realisation of this common goal,” said the MEC.

Furthermore, although the Medical Male Circumcision program did not meet its target we have seen a notable improvement in voluntary Medical Male Circumcision which has increased from 68 711 to 94 024.

With regards to school health services, there have been notable improvements in the screening of children for learning barriers. About 66 566 grade 1 school learners have been screened since April to December exceeding the

planned quarter 3 target by 3 302. An additional 32 561 Grade 8 learners were screened exceeding the quarter 3 target of 27 070. Additional 13 Ward Based Outreach Teams (WBOTs) were established bringing the number to 775. These teams provided medical assistance to 545 238 children under the age five years and above. Further 9875 households visits referrals were made to health facilities by WBOTs. Over 400 995 patients were enrolled on Centralised Chronic Medicine Dispensing and Distribution programme exceeding the target of 270 000.

MEC Ramokgopa stressed that “despite progress across various budget programmes there are still a number of targets that are not met. As a result, during the 3rd quarter reviews, branch heads have been mandated to lead monthly monitoring of performance including providing assurance of the quality of data used and ensure that actions and resolutions are implemented.