

MEC must communicate on Listeriosis outbreak in KZN

The Democratic Alliance (DA) in KwaZulu-Natal welcomes the findings made by the National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD) regarding the current Listeriosis outbreak which already claimed the lives of at least 180 people nationally. We also support Minister Motsoaledi's move to recall products from a company that was identified as a source of spreading the infection.

While there is no need for panic because the condition is treatable with antibiotics, the DA is disappointed by the lack of communication from KZN Health MEC, Sibongiseni Dhlomo, on this matter. It is an indictment against him that he continues to spend money on random propaganda exercises designed to bolster the image of his failing department at a time when communication in terms of a public announcement regarding Listeriosis in our province is far more important.

It is also critical that KZN's healthcare personnel be on the alert for any warning signs and test early to avoid possible

complications or death as a result of Listeriosis. This is particularly relevant in the case of pregnant women, young children and immuno-compromised individuals, all of whom have a higher risk of complications.

The DA will write to MEC Dhlomo to request an update on the department's plans and readiness to handle any further outbreak. We expect the MEC to present this at the next KZN health portfolio committee meeting scheduled for Friday.

The people of KZN have a right to know that they are in good hands and the MEC owes them an explanation as to how his department is managing the situation. It is moments such as this that highlight the dearth of leadership within this department, where time, energy and money is spent on 'big talk' rather than real work.

Dr Imran Keeka, MPL
DA KZN Spokesperson
on Health