



Province of the  
**EASTERN CAPE**

OFFICE OF THE PREMIER

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## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

**TO ALL MEDIA**

**FOR IMMEDIATE USE**

**12 DECEMBER 2021**

### **PREMIER MABUYANE URGES CITIZENS TO STAY ALERT AS THE COVID-19 FOURTH WAVE CREEPS INTO THE EASTERN CAPE AND CONVEYS CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILY OF A KSD INITIATE WHO DIED ON SATURDAY**

Eastern Cape Premier Lubabalo Oscar Mabuyane has called on citizens to remain on high alert as the Covid-19 fourth wave slowly creeps in.

The Premier was speaking following the presentation of an update report on the implementation of the provincial Covid-19 response strategy. The report presented to the Extended Provincial Coronavirus Command Council chaired by Premier Mabuyane this afternoon shows that, the provincial positivity rate has increased to 17, 8% with 3913 new cases reported this week compared to 136 cases in the week before that, raising concerns that the fourth wave is nearer. The recovery rate has dropped to 93,4%.

The number of individuals hospitalised due to Covid-19 is still low compared to previous waves, of the 291 hospital admissions, 278 are in general wards and there is a lower need of oxygenation on admission.



Medical specialists are conducting all necessary scientific tests and monitoring the situation closely.

“We wish to reiterate that vaccination remains the main strategy to prevent severe infections and lower the risk of admissions and death of those infected,” said Mabuyane. “We are ramping up the vaccination of the target populations while ensuring the readiness of health facilities (provide oxygen and beds for children), increase testing and screening, community case management,” he added.

“One of our concerns is the fact that those between the ages 20 – 39 years currently make up 41,8% of hospital admissions compared to the previous waves which largely impacted the elderly,” added Mabuyane. Most of those in hospitals are in general wards with less requiring oxygen or intensive care.

There remains a risk of non-compliance to Alert Level 1 regulations and lapses in the respect of non-pharmaceutical interventions further presented by cultural events which are prone to attract gatherings of people in large groups.

The South African Covid-19 Modelling Consortium has further indicated in its report today that the Buffalo City Metro Municipality has entered the fourth wave while all other regions in the Eastern Cape sustained increase in the number of new infections.

“We encourage all citizens to come forward for vaccination, including those who have not completed their course as well as those who have registered but remain not vaccinated. It is in all our interest to vaccinate to reduce the risk of the calamity experienced in the past,” said Mabuyane. “Our economy is struggling to recover and we must at all costs avoid any situation that may lead to another lockdown.”

**Key statistics about vaccination:**

- 3 090 619 vaccines administered as of 10 December 2021
  - o 804 367 J&J
  - o 2 286 252 Pfizer



- 19 402 Sisonke Booster Vaccine Doses administered
- 2 098 554 Individuals vaccinated
- 42% among vaccine eligible population
- Female: Male ratio 60%:40%

**Meanwhile**, Premier Mabuane has sent his condolences to the family of an 18-year-old initiate who died in the King Sabatha Dalindyebo Municipality (KSD) in Mthatha.

It is alleged that the initiate drowned and succumbed to death after being forced by ikhankatha (care-giver) to swim with other initiates. It is reported that the initiate had refused to swim, indicating to ikhankatha that he cannot swim. The other initiates have subsequently reported that the man (ikhankathatha) who was responsible for their care during their stay in the bush had been abusive towards them.

Premier Mabuane had condemned in the strongest terms the behavior that has been attributed to this particular *khankatha*, saying that parents had entrusted their children to his care. "It cannot be that the very person who is supposed to take care and protect these young initiates while in the bush becomes their tormenter".

His death brings to 19 the number of initiates who have died in the Eastern Cape since the start of the summer initiation season.

END.

**ISSUED BY: PROVINCIAL COMMUNICATION SERVICE – EASTERN CAPE**

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