

MEC Mashego Leads Health Screening Initiative at Thabina Primary School Amid Rising Bilharzia Cases

By Staff Writer

Thabina, [10 September 2024] – In response to the rise of bilharzia cases in the Greater Tzaneen area, MEC for Health, Dieketseng Mashego, visited Thabina Primary School this week, where she spearheaded a health screening and testing initiative for school learners.

This visit comes on the heels of 155 confirmed cases of bilharzia reported across various villages in the region, prompting urgent action to protect the health of local children.

Accompanying the MEC Mashego was senior officials from Health as well as the Department of Basic Education.

The Limpopo Provincial Government has already set up a task team comprised of representatives from the Office of the Premier, Department of Basic Education, Department of Health and Cooperative Governance Human Settlement and Traditional Affairs.

The team led by MEC Mashego conducted screenings and tests for bilharzia, a parasitic disease that can lead to severe health complications if left untreated.

The initiative aims to identify affected students early and provide them with the necessary treatment, while also raising awareness about prevention methods.

Addressing the learners and other community stakeholders at school, MEC Mashego stressed the importance of health screenings and education. “Our coming here is to send a message that we cannot allow our children to suffer from preventable diseases because it is our responsibility to ensure that they are healthy and can focus on their education,” she stated.

“By identifying cases of bilharzia early, we can provide treatment and prevent further spread of the disease.”

MEC Mashego further stressed the importance of prevention.

“We are working with the local water service authorities to conduct water quality tests as one way of preventing the disease because as much as screening, testing and treatment is important, it is even more important to work towards prevention,” says MEC Mashego.

Parents and community involvement has been flagged as an important aspect in dealing with the scourge.

“Parents and guardians must meet us halfway by ensuring that our kids are protected. This can be achieved by ensuring that parents monitor children and ensure that they don’t come into contact with unclean water.”

The screening event is part of a larger campaign by the Limpopo Provincial Government of Health to tackle the prevalence of bilharzia in the Greater Tzaneen area.

The campaign will extend to other villages and schools in the region, ensuring that as many children as possible receive the screenings and treatment they need.