

ONLINE

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2025

Bophelong

WHERE THERE IS LIFE

EXTERNAL NEWSLETTER

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LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH

A long and healthy life for people in Limpopo.





FROM THE MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (MEC)'S PERSPECTIVE

As we bring the final quarter of the year to a close, I am deeply encouraged by the commitment, compassion, and resilience shown across our Department and among our partners. Your efforts continue to strengthen health outcomes for the people of Limpopo.

As the Limpopo Department of Health, we remain committed to ensuring a long and healthy life for all residents of this province. We are particularly proud to have successfully hosted the national World AIDS Day commemoration — a moment that reaffirmed our leadership and dedication in the fight against HIV and AIDS.

The period from October to December highlighted not only our strategic priorities, but also the heart of our mandate: delivering quality, accessible, and people-centred healthcare in every community.

In October, working with key stakeholders, we hosted the inaugural White Cane Walk from SABC Park to Jack Botes Hall. This important event reaffirmed our responsibility to promote inclusivity, dignity, and independence for people with visual impairments. It also strengthened community understanding and support for blind and partially sighted individuals, ensuring that our disability rights agenda continues to leave no one behind.

We also commemorated World Mental Health Day in Ephraim Mogale Municipality, where we emphasized the importance of mental well-being and the need to integrate mental health care across primary healthcare and community structures.

Another milestone was the successful hosting of the two-day

4th Limpopo Wound Care Conference, which brought together specialists and clinicians from various fields. This gathering deepened our collective knowledge of advanced wound management and reinforced the value of continuous learning and innovation—particularly as we face the rising burden of chronic wounds linked to non-communicable diseases.

In recognition of World Diabetes Day, our teams conducted screening and educational activities at Siloam Mall, promoting early detection and healthier lifestyles. The stories shared by patients and healthcare workers were a powerful reminder of the growing diabetes challenge and the need for sustained community engagement.

We also intensified our World AIDS Day build-up activities, promoting prevention, testing, treatment adherence, and stigma reduction. I extend my heartfelt appreciation to all teams who led mobile campaigns, community dialogues, and youth outreach initiatives across the province.

As we conclude this quarter, I remain grateful to every healthcare professional, partner, and community member whose dedication drives our progress. Let us carry this momentum into the new year as we continue working together to build healthier and more resilient communities across Limpopo.

Together, we are shaping a healthcare system that serves all.

Wishing you and your families a blessed Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Merry Christmas to the entire Limpopo community.



THE NATIONAL WORLD AIDS DAY COMMEMORATION HELD AT GA-MASEMOLA, MAKHUDUTHAMAGA MUNICIPALITY SEKHUKHUNE DISTRICT



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Department hosts 4th provincial wound care conference to strengthen clinical excellence



BOLIVIA LODGE: The Limpopo Department of Health successfully hosted the 4th Limpopo Wound Care Conference in Polokwane from 19–20 November 2025.

The two-day conference brought together specialists, clinicians, researchers, and health professionals from different disciplines to strengthen

the province's capacity in wound management and holistic patient care.

When addressing the delegates, Health MEC Ms. Dieketseng Mashego commended the diverse team of experts who continue to advance clinical outcomes in the province. She noted that the event reflected the province's strong multidisciplinary



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approach, represented by professionals from family medicine, internal medicine, nephrology, psychology, podiatry, public health, surgery, wound and stoma therapy, palliative care, anaesthesiology, and other fields.

MEC Mashego emphasised that wound care is not a peripheral service but a frontline component of quality healthcare. She noted that while Rural Health Matters surgical outreach programmes continue to expand access to care across districts, these services also result in new surgical wounds. This, she said, highlights the need for continuous improvement in wound care skills among health workers at all levels.

She further noted that the conference took place during World Diabetes Awareness Month, a period that draws attention to the rising burden of diabetic wounds. These wounds often lead to amputations, disability, long hospital stays, and preventable deaths.

“Early detection, prevention, and proper wound management must become central to everyday clinical practice,” she told the delegates. She added that training health professionals to manage these wounds is not optional but a life-saving intervention.

MEC Mashego highlighted that improving clinicians’ capacity in wound assessment, infection control, nutrition, rehabilitation, referral pathways, and



holistic patient support will help the Department reduce surgical site infections and improve healing outcomes.

She expressed confidence that the conference would continue to create a collaborative platform where clinicians share innovations, reconnect with peers, and learn from leading specialists. She encouraged delegates to embrace knowledge exchange as a catalyst for new ideas and improved clinical practice.



MEC Mashego joins visually impaired community for white cane walk



POLOKWANE: Health MEC Ms. Dieketseng Mashego joined members of the visually impaired community during the inaugural annual White Cane Big Walk, held in October from SABC Park to Jack Botes Hall.

The walk coincided with a handover ceremony during which MEC Mashego presented 65 white canes to nominated beneficiaries. These canes form part of the 300 assistive devices procured by the Department. The event brought together government, civil society

organisations, and community members to promote dignity, independence, and inclusion for people living with visual impairment.

Participants from the South African National Council for the Blind (SANCB), the provincial Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, and the Polokwane Municipality took part in a blindfolded walk. The exercise aimed to build empathy and deepen understanding of the daily challenges faced by visually impaired individuals.

Addressing the community at Jack Botes Hall, MEC

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Mashego emphasised that the white cane is more than an assistive device. She described it as a symbol of courage, resilience, and freedom. “The white cane says to the world, ‘I may not see with my eyes, but I navigate with courage,’” she said.

MEC Mashego highlighted that true health includes mental and social well-being, and that restoring dignity for people with disabilities requires ensuring their full participation in society. “Blindness does not equal helplessness. Regaining independence requires training, support, and specialised rehabilitation,” she said.

For many years, Limpopo has relied on only one orientation and mobility instructor from SANCB to serve more than 120 clients across vast distances. MEC Mashego announced that this situation will soon change. From 1 January 2026, orientation and mobility instructors will be eligible for registration with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA).

“This will allow the Department of Health to formally employ qualified members of the visually impaired community and expand rehabilitation services to more areas,” she said. “Through collaboration and policy reform, we are turning inclusion into a system of care.”

MEC Mashego encouraged the people of Limpopo and South Africa to walk with compassion and purpose. Quoting Helen Keller, she reminded attendees: “Blindness separates people from things, but blindness of compassion separates people from people.”

This year’s theme, “Love Your Eyes: The White Cane Restores Your Dignity Because It Ensures Your Destination,” reflected the collective commitment to promoting safe mobility and empowering individuals to move confidently and independently.



WORLD AIDS DAY BUILD UP ACTIVITIES

HEALTH MEC MS DIEKETSENG MASHEGO TOGETHER WITH THE MAYOR OF MAKHUDUTHAMAGA MUNICIPALITY CLLR. MERAH MAHLASE PAID A COURTESY VISIT TO KGOSHIGADI MAHLAKO 'A NGWATO MASEMOLA AHEAD OF THE NATIONAL COMMEMORATION OF THE WORLD AIDS DAY HELD AT MASEMOLA STADIUM.



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MEC MASHEGO TALKS TO MINERS AT SEFATENG VILLAGE



SEFATENG VILLAGE: Health MEC Ms. Dieketseng Mashego recently visited Sefateng Chrome Mine to address mineworkers during an Employee Wellness Programme hosted in partnership with Fetakgomo Tubatse Municipality in the Sekhukhune District.

The programme focused on HIV/AIDS testing and screening, TB awareness, and strengthening the fight against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) within mining communities. It formed part of the build-up activities leading to the National World AIDS Day commemoration held at Ga-Masemola on Monday, 1 December 2025.

Addressing the miners, MEC Mashego stressed that

employee wellness is central to productivity, safety, and sustainable economic development in the mining sector. She highlighted that HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and GBV remain critical public health concerns, particularly in high-risk sectors such as mining.

“Through this partnership, the Department aims to ensure that mine employees have access to early diagnosis, treatment, counselling, and referral services,” she said.

MEC Mashego encouraged mineworkers to take responsibility for their health and to break the stigma associated with testing and treatment.

“Healthy workers build stronger families and stronger communities. That is why, as the Department, we will



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always support this partnership,” she added.

She also commended Sefateng Chrome Mine for prioritising the well-being of its workforce and surrounding communities.

“As a government representative, I am here today to reaffirm government’s commitment to supporting such

collaborations. Together, we can fight HIV/AIDS, TB, and GBV, which require united action across all sectors,” she said.

MEC Mashego concluded by urging mineworkers to become ambassadors of positive health behaviour and champions of a GBV-free.



AS PART OF BUILD-UP ACTIVITIES FOR THE COMMEMORATION OF THE WORLD DIABETES DAY, LETABA HOSPITAL HOSTED AN AWARENESS CAMPAIGN TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE CAUSES, PREVENTION, AND MANAGEMENT OF DIABETES. A TEAM OF HEALTH PROFESSIONALS CAMPED AT THE HOSPITAL PRECINCT PROVIDE FOR FREE SCREENINGS, NUTRITIONAL ASSESSMENTS, AND BMI CHECKS IN THE HOSPITAL TO THE PUBLIC.



HEALTH MEC, MS DIEKETSENG MASHEGO AWARDS HEALTH PROFESSIONALS FOR THEIR STERLING WORK IN CHAMPIONING THE RURAL HEALTH MATTERS OUTREACHES



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DIABETES AWARENESS CAMPAIGN AT SILOAM

This campaign featured different healthcare professionals from local health facilities across vhembe district. These health professionals offered valuable insights and answering questions about diabetes care and prevention.



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HOSPITALS OUTREACHES:

MANKWENG HOSPITAL'S OUTREACH ACTIVITY



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GEORGE MASEBE HOSPITAL PARTICIPATES IN CHILDHOOD CANCER AWARENESS



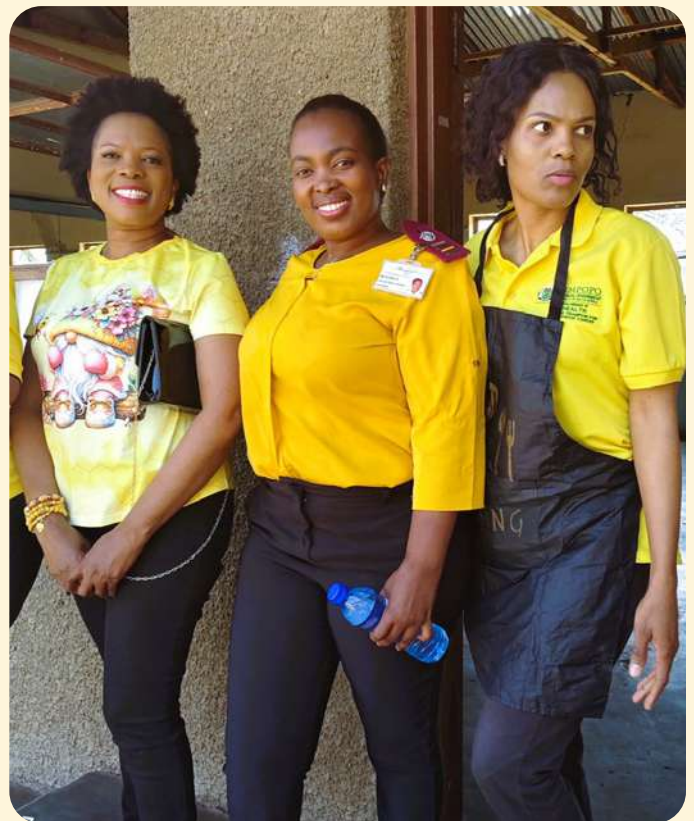
The Paediatrics Ward (PEADs) of George Masebe Hospital recently took part in an early childhood cancer awareness campaign held at Leubaneng Primary School in the Bakenberg North Circuit. The campaign was presented under the theme “SAINT – Warning Signs of Childhood Cancer.”

Dr Mahloko and Ms Mashala, a registered nurse from the PEADs ward, led the initiative. According to Dr Mahloko, the campaign aims to strengthen hospital–community relations and promote access to services offered by George Masebe Hospital.

“The main intention of this campaign is to educate stakeholders about the importance of early detection, the key signs and symptoms of childhood cancer, and the psychosocial support available to affected families,” she said.

This initiative supports the Limpopo Department of Health’s mission to promote a long and healthy life for the people of Limpopo. “Through ongoing community outreach efforts, George Masebe Hospital continues to build strong partnerships with local communities while raising awareness about critical health issues affecting children,” Dr Mahloko added.

Learners, educators, parents, and community members actively participated in the awareness activities, helping to spread crucial information about childhood cancer.



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FH ODENDAAL HOSPITAL'S WORLD AIDS DAY BUILD-UP ACTIVITY.

As part of World AIDS Day built up activities a team of health professionals from FH Odendaal hospital conducted awareness campaign on HIV/AIDS and diabetes at Alma community. The campaign focused on educating the community about prevention, transmission, healthy living, and access to care.



Department observes World Mental Health Day in Sekhukhune district



The Limpopo Department of Health joined the global community in observing World Mental Health Day during a provincial commemoration held recently at the Mighty Blues Sports Ground in Ephraim Mogale Municipality, Sekhukhune District.

The event took place under the global theme, “Access to Services – Mental Health Services in Catastrophes and Emergencies.”

Led by Health MEC Ms. Dieketseng Mashego, the commemoration brought together traditional leaders, government officials, health professionals, partners, and community members.

In her address, MEC Mashego noted that the theme reflects the lived realities of many communities across Limpopo, especially in the wake of traumatic events and ongoing social challenges.

She highlighted how the COVID-19 pandemic reshaped daily life and contributed significantly to rising levels of anxiety, depression, and stress-related conditions, particularly among young people, healthcare workers, and women.

MEC Mashego also reflected on recent tragedies in the province, including the loss of 43 international citizens in a bus accident on the N1 near Makhado and another accident on the R81 that claimed 13 lives.

“These incidents leave deep emotional and

psychological wounds for survivors, families, and emergency responders who often experience burnout and secondary trauma,” she said.

According to the World Health Organisation, one in four people live with a mental health condition. Yet more than 75% of individuals in low- and middle-income countries do not receive treatment due to limited resources, stigma, and a shortage of trained professionals.

MEC Mashego reaffirmed that Limpopo continues to align with the National Mental Health Policy Framework (2023–2030), ensuring that mental health remains central to the province’s health agenda.

She expressed confidence in the province’s growing network of mental health services, including specialised psychiatric hospitals such as Thabamopo, Hayani, and Evuxakeni.

The MEC also announced progress in designating Matlala Hospital as a District Mental Health Hospital, which will expand services to include forensic mental health, child and adolescent psychiatry, and community-based rehabilitation.

“This development forms part of the province’s commitment to decentralising services so that communities have easier access to mental health care,” she said.

To respond to rising community needs, MEC Mashego revealed that the Department will soon introduce a 24-hour mental health crisis line and WhatsApp service, staffed by Registered Counsellors who will provide immediate trauma support.





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