



TOP NEWS OF THE MONTH

AFRICAN VACCINATION WEEK COMMEMORATION

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The Ministry of Health with support from the World Health Organisation (WHO) has sensitized over 1300 school going children, health workers and patients in the Hhohho region on hand hygiene.

WORLD HAND HYGIENE DAY COMMEMORATION

HUNDREDS FLOCK IN FOR VACCINATION OUTREACH SERVICES AT MATSAPHA

Hundreds of children benefitted from the vaccination services brought by the Ministry of Health on Saturday at Mathangeni, Matsapha.

This was during the African Vaccination Week (AVW) commemoration at Mathangeni Clinic on 27 May 2023. Commemoration of the AVW in the Kingdom was delayed because the Ministry of Health is preparing for the introduction of the HPV vaccine, which is scheduled for the second week of June. However, regions provided outreach services to different communities during the AVW which is commemorated on the last week of April.

Xolile Khumalo is a mother of two boys aged five and three. She resides in Mathangeni, an industrial town in Matsapha under the Manzini region. Mathangeni is one of the busiest areas in Matsapha because a lot of the people who work in the textile firms reside there, hence it has a high population.

Khumalo says the high number of people staying in the area makes it easy for diseases such as Measles to spread among children. She said, as a result, she took it upon herself to ensure that all her children are immunized against all vaccine preventable diseases to protect them from infections.

“I leave my children at the day-care when I go to work. At the day-care they know the immunization status of my children because I take them myself for immunization. This clinic is open on weekends to cater for us mothers who are working,” Khumalo said while lifting up her younger child.

She mentioned that both her children are up to date with their immunization because she understands that it is the only barrier that can prevent them from diseases and facilitate proper growth. She said it is only the young one that had missed one appointment; hence she took advantage of the AVW commemoration to come



Xolile Khumalo carrying her 3-year old son after he received his vaccination



Vaccination of children in progress during the 2023 AVW



Mothers came in their numbers to bring their children for vaccination



EPI Programme Manager Xolisile Dlamini conducting health education

and immunize the little one.

“We have strict rules at work and bringing children during the weekend is not possible, we are happy that this clinic opens on Saturdays. If it were not for the availability of services on Saturdays, our children would not be immunized at all because we do not get the time,” she said.

She further encouraged parents and guardians to ensure that their children are up to date with their immunization to prevent the spread of diseases and keep children safe.

Speaking at the same event, Sister Thuli Magagula said it is important that all children are immunized against vaccine preventable diseases because these diseases are dangerous and can cause lifelong disability.

“Immunization builds a strong wall that protects our children from diseases that may be imported from other countries. If a disease comes in and find all of our children immunized, it cannot affect them. We are grateful to the mothers who took their time to bring their children to immunize” she said. Magagula noted that most mothers in the

Mathangeni community are working in the textile firms, hence they do not get the time to bring their children for immunization. She said thus it was important for the Ministry of Health to ensure that immunization services are available on the weekend. The Mathangeni clinic was built with the help of AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF).

Magagula said they were happy with the number of mothers who came for the services, adding that some even took their COVID shots and boosters.

In Eswatini, vaccines have saved countless lives, lowered the incidence of polio, disability and death from diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, measles and rubella by 100 percent in the last thirteen years. Immunization has helped drive the reduction in child mortality. Coverage of vaccines that have been in use since the inception of the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) has expanded including the newly introduced vaccines which prevents disease such as Hepatitis B, Hemophilus Influenzae Type B (Hib), Pneumococcal disease and Rotavirus diarrhoea.

PICTORIAL: WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY COMMEMORATION AT MHLATANE

Theme: "Grow Food not Tobacco"

The Ministry of Health, joined by the World Health Organization and the Pigg's Peak Town Board commemorated the World No Tobacco Day at Mhlatane High School. over 1 400 high school pupils were reached with no tobacco messages including the risks associated with tobacco use to one's health, the environment and the economy.



Dumsile Gamedze- Mkhonta from Pigg's peak Town Board addressing the children



WHO Health Promotion Officer Dr Kevin Makadzange



The Ministry of Health team and partners, posing with the School's Principal and pupils



Mhlatane High School Duputy Principal Mr. Mavuso and Health Promotion Officer Sidumo Lukhele (r)



Mhlatane High School pupils listening to different speakers during the World No Tobacco Day commemoration at the School



Peter Ssemwogerere from the Association of Students Against Drug Abuse and Human Trafficking



Vusi Shabangu from the NCDs programme presenting on the dangers of tobacco use

WORLD HAND HYGIENE DAY COMMEMORATION

As the world experiences a growing burden of diseases that are transmitted through poor hand hygiene such as Cholera, COVID-19 etc, the Ministry of Health with support from the World Health Organisation (WHO) has sensitized over 1300 school going children, health workers and patients in the Hhohho region on hand hygiene.

This was during the commemoration of the World Hand Hygiene Day (WHHD) on 26 May 2023. This day is commemorated globally on 5th of May every year. The aim of the WHHD is to maintain global promotion, visibility, and sustainability of hand hygiene in health care and to 'bring people together' in support of hand hygiene improvement around the world.

This year's campaign was held under the theme: "Together, we can accelerate action to prevent infections and antimicrobial resistance in health care and build a culture of safety and quality in which hand hygiene improvement is given high priority". The slogan is "Accelerate action together. SAVE LIVES – Clean Your Hands".

The Ministry of Health together with WHO and other partners sensitized about 1,260 school-going children and 67 teachers in three schools including two primary schools and one high school. The team comprising of the WHO Infection, Prevention and Control (IPC), Quality Assurance Unit in the Ministry of Health, WASH Officers from UNICEF as well as officers from the Health Promotion Unit also visited two clinics to sensitize both patients and health workers on hand hygiene.

WHO Human Resource for Health (HRH) Officer Ms Bawinile who is also the IPC focal



Officers from the Ministry of Health Quality Assurance Unit (above and below) demonstrating to the pupils on proper hand washing



person stated that the objective of the campaign was to Strengthen and empower communities of actors in health care to accelerate action to improve hand hygiene and infection prevention and control at point of care. The aim was also to foster collaboration and working together of people and organizations towards the common goal of minimizing the risk of infections and the development of antimicrobial resistance in health care. This sensitization campaign has come at the right time when the country is experiencing Cholera infection, which can be



A demonstration of proper hand washing using running water



One of the Malanzela Primary School pupils showing hr clean hands after washing



IPC Focal Person Nomsa Dlamini donating a box of sanitizer to Malanzela Primary School teacher

prevented through proper hand hygiene practices. The Health Promotion Officer in the Ministry of Health Mr Calvin Dlamini conducted health education, encouraging children and teachers to promote hand washing for the prevention of disease, using soap and running water or hand sanitizer. The WASH and IPC officers demonstrated proper hand washing to the pupils, teachers, patients and health care workers. The team also used edutainment to ensure that the messages are delivered an approach that is friendly to the children.

The campaign also integrated education on the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccine, which the government of Eswatini will introduced during the second week of June 2023. The HPV campaign will target girls aged between 9-14, hence the WHHD campaign provided a good opportunity to also educate and mobilise children to take the vaccine once it is available. Worth noting is that most of the children, when quizzed about cancers, showed high knowledge of the different cancers and the eager to vaccinate.



WHO IPC Focal Person Mawinile Madziniso addressing Maguga Clinic Nurses and patients



Health Promotion Officer Calvin Dlamini conducting health education at Mbeka Anglican High School



One of the pupils at Nkomazi Primary demonstrating proper hand washing