

Health, Wellness and Happiness Campaign launched in Gauteng, South Africa

On Friday 16 November 2018, more than 10 000 Gauteng residents converged on Johannesburg, South Africa (SA), to witness the launch of the provincial 3-year Health, Wellness and Happiness Campaign. Under the slogan 'I can be healthy, well and happy, you can be healthy, well and happy, together we can do it!' the campaign heralds a new era of taking a proactive rather than reactive approach to healthcare, emphasising health promotion and disease prevention.

In his address on this day, the SA Minister of Health, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, explained that the launch of the campaign represents a revolution, to reorientate the healthcare system in the country towards preventive and promotive care. Gauteng Premier David Makhura said that the wealth of every nation is its health, and this campaign is focused on turning the Gauteng healthcare system around. He highlighted the importance of a Health in all Policies (HiAP) approach towards health.

Gauteng Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Health, Dr Gwen Ramokgopa, said that many of us in Gauteng are sick: the province is battling with a quadruple burden of disease that accounts for the highest proportion of deaths in the country, and its healthcare system is the most overburdened. For example, the overall number of patients seen in the 2017/18 financial year in hospitals and primary healthcare (PHC) facilities was 26 608 243. She emphasised the need to change the situation by means of the province 'channelling all its efforts towards health promotion and disease prevention, as well as ensuring happy individuals, families and communities'.

In order to work on the implementation of this revolution – making Gauteng communities healthy, well and happy – it was

pronounced that the Gauteng Department of Health (GDoH) would commit itself to strengthening its partnerships with communities, to promote long-term health-seeking behaviours and healthy lives through a 'policy framework for an integrated approach towards health, wellness and happiness promotion and adherence'. The policy framework is not only intended to guide sectors within the health sector, but also those outside the health domain in mainstreaming integrated approaches into their planning and programme development. It adopts a 'whole-of-government', multisectoral approach, and therefore seeks to address the impact of other sectors' policies on community health.

To improve and foster ownership of the interventions at all levels, the document highlights the key roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders within the health programme. The policy framework is aligned to the national and provincial strategic plans to achieve the objectives of the National Development Plan 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals. The ultimate goal of this endeavour is to create and to implement healthy public policies within the province. This would intensify the process of establishing the Gauteng Provincial Health Commission (to replace the HIV and AIDS Council, to ensure the integration of HIV policy with that for other chronic diseases), and developing a model and system for working with non-governmental organisations to support the Health, Wellness and Happiness promotion programme for the GDoH. This will require the effective and efficient use of different components of PHC re-engineering teams, such as ward-based PHC outreach teams.