

MEDIA STATEMENT

To: Editors & Health Journalists
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Health Department calls for vigilance as mpox cases re-emerge

Pretoria: The Department of Health calls for ongoing public vigilance against mpox disease as two more laboratory-confirmed cases have been detected in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. The recent cases come 26 days since the last cases of mpox were reported in South Africa

This increases the total number of cases from 22 to 24, of which 12 were reported in Gauteng, 11 reported in KwaZulu-Natal and one in the Western Cape. The number of deaths linked to the disease remains three.

Case 23 is a 36-year-old man from KwaZulu-Natal who was admitted at local public health facility in Durban late in July after he experienced mpox-like rash and along with fatigue, muscle pain and rigor. The patient has no international travel history.

Case 24 is a 20-year-old man from Gauteng who was seen at a private health facility in Johannesburg on Friday, 2 August. The case presented with typical mpox lesions. He confirmed that he has international travel history to Peru in South America. It is uncertain if exposure occurred in Peru or South Africa. According to the World Health Organization multi-country mpox outbreak, Peru is amongst countries with high numbers of positive cases in the region of the Americas.

Contact tracing and monitoring activities are ongoing in the affected communities in both provinces, and the Department urges all the identified contacts to cooperate with health officials during contact tracing for screening and possible diagnosis to prevent further transmission of this preventable and treatable disease.

Of the 22 cases recorded between 8 May and 6 July, 19 of them have fully recovered. All people with suspected symptoms are reminded to visit the nearest healthcare facility right away for clinical evaluation, diagnosis and treatment options, instead of self-diagnosing and isolation.

Meanwhile, the Department would like to confirm arrival of another batch of Tecovirimat, also known as TPOXX donated by the World Health Organization as part of ongoing support to the country's response efforts to this preventable and manageable disease.

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