

Questions sent to Mr Siyanda Manana and Miyakazi Nokwe on 14 October for TB story

Good afternoon Mnu Manana, Luvuyo Mehlwana from Spotlight online Health Publication. I am working on an article about TB patients who are "lost" or have not show up for treatment during lockdown due to Covid-19. Information which has been provided to us (TAC and members of the media) during the oversight visit to clinics in Nelson Mandela Metro District, points that clinics had lost contact with many of TB patients during lockdown.

It is also reported that with restrictions on movement due to the Covid-19 pandemic and shrinking disposable income to support transportation costs and other direct and indirect medical costs, people with TB faced difficulties than before in accessing health services.

The questions which I have are the following:

- * Are you in a position to confirm that clinics lost TB patients during lockdown?
- * If yes how many patients get lost during lockdown? (I will be happy if you can break down these numbers per District)
- * What is the EC Health department doing to get more people tested?
- * What is department is doing to help people stay on TB treatment and what are is the catchup plan to restart TB programmes? (I will appreciate if you can give comprehensive response on this one)
- * What are the lessons learnt out of lockdown when it comes to medication distribution and patients access to healthcare facilities?
- * Beside default what are other bigger TB challenges facing Eastern Cape?

Any further information or comment you can provide on the above will be appreciated.

Please can I have your response to this information by 3pm Friday 16 October 2020.

Regards

Luvuyo Mehlwana

082 8383 080