



**GAUTENG PROVINCE**  
HEALTH  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

**TO: All Media**

**ATT: News Editors, Health Reporters**

**For immediate release**

**Monday, 06 April 2020**

### **PUBLIC URGED TO TAKE PART IN COVID-19 SCREENING AND TESTING FOLLOWING FAKE NEWS SCARE**

The Gauteng Department of Health (GDoH) wishes to advise the public to be vigilant of misleading information and fake news from unreliable news sources, which purport to share valuable insights on Covid-19.

Today our screening and testing teams have had to plead with community members, who refused to take part in the screening and testing drive due to a misleading video which has gone viral.

In the video the public is misled not to agree to being tested, because, the swabs which will be used for the tests are allegedly contaminated with Covid-19. We wish to state categorically that this is not true and we can assure the public that the screening and testing will not expose anyone to Covid-19, in any way.

As stated by the President the screening and testing initiative is aimed at containing the spread of the coronavirus. We urge the public to take Covid-19 seriously. Over a million people globally have tested positive for the virus, and thousands have lost their lives, including 11 in our country.

Community health care workers in Gauteng working with multiple stakeholders are currently undertaking a large scale community testing and screening programme which is aimed at contributing to interrupting the transmission of COVID-19.

It should be noted that anyone that creates or spreads fake news about Covid-19 is liable for prosecution. We urge members of the public to verify information before distributing it to others. **Please report fake news to: Whatsapp line: 0769664015 or email [fakenewsalert@dtps.gov.za](mailto:fakenewsalert@dtps.gov.za).**

**Ends/**

**For more information contact**

**Kwara Kekana, Spokesperson: MEC for Health**

**074 054 3826 or [Kwara.Kekana@gauteng.gov.za](mailto:Kwara.Kekana@gauteng.gov.za)**

**OR**

**Philani Mhlungu, Media Liaison Officer: MEC for Health**

**060 961 2627 or [Philani.Mhlungu@gauteng.gov.za](mailto:Philani.Mhlungu@gauteng.gov.za)**

**For media releases, speeches and news visit the Gauteng Department of Health's portal at [www.gauteng.gov.za](http://www.gauteng.gov.za)**