



GAUTENG PROVINCE

HEALTH
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

FRIDAY, 08 MARCH 2024

WORLD CLASS NUCLEAR MEDICINE RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE (NuMeRI) FACILITY SETS STEVE BIKO ACADEMIC HOSPITAL APART

The Nuclear Medicine Research Infrastructure (NuMeRI) centre housed at the Steve Biko Academic Hospital (SBAH) in Pretoria has propelled the healthcare facility into a league of its own in the area of nuclear medicine and research in Africa.

The half a billion rand NuMeRI facility is part of the Department of Science and Technology's South African Research Infrastructure Roadmap (SARIR) and is a one-stop-shop medical nuclear imaging and theragnostic facility dedicated to drug development and clinical research for the benefit of the South African, African and global health care sector. In addition, local drug researchers, medical practitioners, and international collaborators will also benefit from NuMeRI.

The facility's main purpose is to facilitate research, innovation and value generation in areas of country and region-specific health challenges. Some of the functions that the NuMeRI centre will offer include clinical unit, radiopharmacy, basic and translational research, preclinical imaging, node of infection imaging and medical physics and radiobiology unit.

Professor Mike Sathekge said the futuristic infrastructure will help improve the quality of life and extend the lifespan and overall survival of cancer patients using radiopharmaceuticals. "We are currently in a position to do clinical trials that will help us develop and have access to new treatment for conditions that are difficult to treat."

Reflecting on the NuMeRI centre during her oversight visit on Thursday, 07 March 2024, Gauteng MEC for Health and Wellness, Nomantu Nkomo-Ralehoko said, the establishment of this facility marks a significant milestone in the field of nuclear medicine, pushing the boundaries of what was previously thought to be impossible. "Its presence not only enhances the medical capabilities within Gauteng province but also elevates the provincial status as a leader in healthcare innovation and excellence."

The MEC said that the department is very proud to have a state-of-art facility in one of the iconic hospitals such as SBAH. “This facility will improve clinical outcomes not only in South Africa but to the rest of the African continent. This happens at the time when the country is awaiting the President to sign in to law the National Health Insurance Bill paving the way of for the phased-in roll out of the National Health Insurance which will bring significant changes in terms of equity and access within the healthcare system,” explained MEC Nkomo-Ralehoko.

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Issued by Gauteng Department of Health

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