



**GAUTENG PROVINCE**

HEALTH  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

**Sunday, 01 November 2020**

### **GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONDUCT COVID-19 ANTIBODY SURVEY TO MEASURE VIRUS INFECTION RATE IN THE PROVINCE**

The Gauteng Department of Health in partnership with the Medical Research Council VIDA Research Unit, University of Pretoria, and University of the Witwatersrand is conducting massive antibody survey to understand the extent of COVID-19 infections in the province.

Antibody or Seroprevalence surveys are investigations that use antibody testing to determine the percentage of people who have been infected with Covid-19.

There are many people in Gauteng who possibly had Covid-19 but were never counted as Covid-19 cases because they were never tested. The reason why they were not tested could be that they did not have symptoms of Covid-19 or did not meet the criteria to have a test.

The survey will assist government to better understand how the virus is spreading throughout the Gauteng population over time and to be able to put adequate response measures to stop its further spread.

Health professionals will be visiting 3500 households targeting 14 000 people across the province between November and December 2020. The test will be done by pricking a person's finger to take a few drops of blood which will be sent to a laboratory for testing.

This is done to identify people in the population of the province who have antibodies against Covid-19. Antibody test results can provide information about previous infections in people who had or did not have any symptoms of the virus.

The Gauteng Acting MEC for Health Jacob Mamabolo said: "This survey is key in our efforts to contain the spread of the virus, and to do that we need to get a relatively clear estimate of who has been infected, where are they based and the trajectory of the virus.

“When we have such information at our disposal we will be able to make appropriate decisions in response to the pandemic taking into consideration government’s limited resources.”

Government urges residents to cooperate and support the antibody survey and wishes to assure the public that all information gathered will be treated with confidentiality, and the survey will not be used to send people for quarantine. Health professionals that will be visiting homes will only do so during the day and will be wearing their uniform and carry their identification tags.

Where members of the public have questions about the survey they can contact the Gauteng Provincial Government Covid-19 Hotline: 0800 428 8364 / 0800 228 827 or [hotline@gauteng.gov.za](mailto:hotline@gauteng.gov.za).

**Ends**

**Issued by Gauteng Department of Health**

**For more information, contact**

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

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

**OR**

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

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

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