# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 814**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 08)**

**Ms M D Hlengwa (IFP) to ask the Minister of Health:**

(1) Whether, in view of Gauteng reportedly having 47 confirmed cases of measles, North West 157, Mpumalanga 97 and Limpopo with the highest number of infections recorded at 167, his department is taking any steps towards containing the outbreak; if not, why not; if so, what steps;

(2) whether his department has considered an immunisation drive at all schools, primarily primary schools; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details? **NW914E**

**REPLY:**

(1) The Department is taking the following epidemiological responses to contain measles outbreak:

1. Measles campaign vaccination

Nationwide mass measles vaccination campaign is conducted in all 52 districts to contain outbreak by administering additional measles dose to all children from 6 months to 15 years regardless of their previous history of measles vaccination.

1. Epidemiological and clinical management of cases and contacts.

* All confirmed measles outbreak cases are epidemiologically investigated through field visits, and support to the affected areas are provided by both provincial and national teams.
* All suspected measles outbreaks are confirmed by the National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD) to be due to measles virus infection.
* There is clinical management of cases including isolation, administration of Vitamin A, management of complications and follow-up of close contacts.

1. Intensified Measles surveillance

* Measles surveillance is intensified to actively seek additional cases both in public and private health facilities.
* Health workers are urged to be on the alert to detect, investigate and appropriately manage cases.
* There is an ongoing full investigations of possible outbreaks in non-affected districts and urgent measures to strengthen surveillance are implemented.

1. Enhanced communication

Various Risk Communication and Community Engagement platforms are used to raise awareness in the communities about the disease and its prevention - and alerted to report people with measles symptoms and to ensure that children are fully vaccinated according to the national schedule.

1. Establishment of Outbreak Response teams

Outbreak teams have been established at district, provincial and national levels. The following work streams have been established within the national outbreak response team:

* Case management (including contact tracing)
* Surveillance and reporting
* Risk Communication and Community Engagement
* Supplementary vaccination campaign planning and execution – includes vaccine procurement and data management sub-streams.

(b) Children from 6 months to 15 years are given an additional measles dose at Early Development Centres, Primary schools and High schools.

END.