# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 828**

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

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

With regard to the reported increase in Cholera outbreaks in the Republic as of 28 February 2023, with a total of six confirmed cases, including one death, having been reported in Gauteng (details furnished), what steps is his department taking towards containing the outbreak? **NW928E**

**REPLY:**

**Steps the department has taken to raise awareness amongst the public about the prevention and management of cholera.**

After the WHO reported that the cholera outbreak had occurred in Malawi and Mozambique, and other countries in the SADC regions, the National Department of Health alerted all the provinces about the cholera outbreak. The provinces were requested to use the risk assessment and contingency plan tools to assess their capacity for preparedness and readiness for cholera outbreak. The National Department of Health met with the provinces to discuss the plans and actions required in preventing and controlling the spread of cholera. Steps that were taken to raise awareness amongst the public about the prevention and management of cholera are outlined below as follows:

1. **Prevention and Control**

The National Department of Health has activated the Multisectoral National Outbreak Response Teams (MNORT), which includes members from the National Department of Health, National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD), provinces and the World Health Organization (WHO). The focus areas include surveillance; water, sanitation and hygiene; social mobilisation; Risk Communication and Community Engagement. The MNORT meetings are held on weekly basis (Fridays) to discuss the ongoing cholera outbreak in the country.

* A public announcement was made to inform and alert the public about the outbreak of cholera.
* All provinces received cholera guidelines and case investigation forms.
1. **Surveillance**

Disease surveillance, preparedness and outbreak response activities to detect outbreaks rapidly are ongoing in the provinces and at national level.

1. **Water and sanitation interventions**

The long-term solution for cholera control lies in access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation. Actions targeting environmental conditions including the implementation of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) solutions to ensure use of safe water, basic sanitation and good hygiene practices in cholera hotspots are being addressed.

1. **Community Engagement**

Community engagements were conducted in all provinces, and distribution of Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) pamphlets and posters to teach the public about potential risks, symptoms of cholera, precautions to take to avoid cholera, when and where to report cases and to seek immediate treatment when symptoms appear continues to take place.

Awareness was raised about prevention through:

* Development and distribution of posters and flyers
* Giving health talks on community radio stations
* Cholera prevention and management messages were shared using departmental social media.
* Continuous health education is conducted in health facilities.

END.