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MEC BELINDA SCOTT DECLARES WAR ON HIV AND AIDS AT MPOPHOMENI

HOWICK - Residents of Mpophomeni started their weekend on a different note today when they hosted KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Finance, Belinda Scott and uMngeni Mayor, Mbali Myeni in their houses.

Scott and Myeni combed through Mpophomeni township on a door-to-door visit mobilising residents to join the fight against HIV and AIDS.

We have visited the Ward 10 in Howick. It is part of our HIV and AIDS awareness campaign of the Provincial Government. It has been a very fruitful day. We have gone from care homes to orphanages HIV and Aids Clinic and gardening projects. We are very heartened to see the commitment of the Non Governmental Organisation (NGO) sector in this area. As the Department, we have left behind things that they need such as FutureLife which is very nutritious as well as a stove for one creche, and many things on our way. I just want to urge this community to embrace these NGOs and work with them because if we have more NGOs working with government we are able to reach greater population in our message," said MEC Belinda Scott.

She said the campaign sought to engage the community vigorously and find ways to deal with HIV and AIDS.

"We will do all in our power to fight the spread of HIV and AIDS. We want to educate and protect our people from HIV and AIDS. While we encourage our youth to abstain, we also encourage those that are sexually active to protect themselves," said Scott.

The MEC spent hours in the township knocking door-to-door and encouraging residents to take the fight against AIDS to another level.

Along her was UMngeni Municipality Mayor, Mbali Myeni also threw her weight behind the campaign. "Enough is enough! We can't have more new HIV infections. Our people are dying of the disease. If we talk to each other about ways to protect our people from getting HIV, we will win the fight against AIDS. These are not just numbers but it is our parents, sisters, brothers and children. It can't be business as usual when our people are dying of AIDS," said Mayor Myeni.

The MEC and the Mayor kicked off their day by leading a peaceful walk on the streets of Mpophomeni chanting anti-AIDS slogans. The walk caught attention of residents as participants were carrying placards with complementing messages and also distributing pamphlets.

Scott and Myeni visited eThembeni (home for people infected and affected with HIV) and left nutritional food, eThembeni Creche where they left a stove, and went to Friends For Life gardens where they planted vegetables. Friends For Life is an NGO that assists people living with HIV and AIDS to take their medication.

The campaign has been sanctioned by the provincial government cabinet as a build up programme towards the 21st International AIDS Conference in Durban in July 2017.

MEC Scott will roll out the campaign to other six local municipalities in uMgungundlovu where she will mobilise people to join the fight against HIV and AIDS.

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