

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

To: Editors & Health Journalists  
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### **Department rolls out mpox vaccination as new cases are detected**

**Pretoria:** The Department of Health embarks on vaccination drive against mpox disease as the number of laboratory-confirmed cases of the disease is gradually rising in the country. The vaccination programme will target the most affected provinces which currently include Gauteng, Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal.

Two laboratory-confirmed cases have recently recorded in Gauteng and Western Cape respectively. This increases the total cumulative number of confirmed cases to ten since the beginning of the year 2025. The two new cases include a 32 year-old and a 45 year-old patients from Cape Town, Western Cape and Johannesburg, Gauteng. Both of them have no travel history.

Vaccination helps to control the spread of this preventable and manageable disease, with vaccinated individuals being protected from becoming infected and from developing severe complications. Vaccination can be accessed at some public health facilities, travel clinics and a few private providers in the above-mentioned provinces.

Members of the public are urged to be extra vigilant of mpox symptoms, and those who suspect that they are at risk of mpox infection are advised to consult their nearest health facility or healthcare provider for screening and testing, and to find out if they are eligible for this life-saving vaccination. Priority will be given to people at a higher risk of contacting the virus, including those who came into close contact with people who tested positive, people with multiple sexual partners and travellers going to areas where there is an outbreak of mpox. Where indicated vaccination will be offered to pregnant women and children older than 2 years.

The Department received around 10 500 doses of the mpox vaccine, Imvanex® as a donation from the Africa Centres for Disease Control through the Access and Allocation Mechanism for Mpox, in an effort to combat the various mpox outbreaks in the African continent. The South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA) authorised the importation of this vaccine through a Section 21 process which covers the sale and use of medicines not yet registered in South Africa. Imvanex® samples were tested by the National Control Laboratory to establish the vaccines' safety and efficacy, prior to its release to the South African market.

The vaccine was found to be safe and is well tolerated in the vast majority of people. As with any vaccine, some people may experience mild to moderate side effects after being vaccinated. This is a normal sign that the body is developing some level of

immunity to prevent severity of the disease if infected. Several countries including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, Uganda, the United States, Canada and European countries have utilised the mpox vaccine to control the spread of the disease. Common side effects that might be experienced following immunisation, include pain, redness, swelling and itching at the injection site; muscle pain; headache; nausea; and fever. However, most side effects disappear on their own within a few days without treatment.

These side effects can be managed by have enough rest, staying hydrated and taking medication to manage pain, if needed. Individuals are encouraged to report any suspected side effects following immunisation directly to a healthcare professional or via the Med Safety App, which can be downloaded for free on an Android or IOS smart phone at <https://medsafety.sahpra.org.za>).

The number of mpox vaccine doses allocated to South Africa is limited and quantities will be issued in a phased approach, prioritising outbreak hotspots and based on vaccine availability. More information regarding vaccination sites can be accessed at: [:https://health.gov.za/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/2025-MPOX-VACCINATION-SITES.pdf](https://health.gov.za/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/2025-MPOX-VACCINATION-SITES.pdf).

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