

## Media statement

**13 September 2017**

### **Former Nyaope addicts campaign with SAPS in KwaMhlanga**

Mpumalanga Community Safety, Security and Liaison MEC Pat Ngomane has applauded SAPS in KwaMhlanga utilizing former Nyaope addicts in their awareness campaigns on drugs and substance abuse in the area.

The MEC says although he understands that drug is highly addictive, he was hopeful that after seeing the addicts over the weekend who were part of the Public Participation Programme that the department conducted in Thembisile Hani Local Municipality over the weekend, the war against the scourge would be won.

The initiative was announced by KwaMhlanga Cluster, Major General Christine Sithole who was speaking on behalf of SAPS Provincial Commissioner, LT. Gen Mondli Zuma. According to Sithole, the learners go with SAPS members in various schools to speak to young people about the dangers of drugs and substance abuse particularly Nyaope.

Sithole added that learners volunteered in one of the campaigns that were conducted in KwaMhlanga that they needed help to quit the drug. They were subsequently placed on a 21 days rehabilitation programme at Kwasizabantu Institution in KwaZulu Natal Province.

The former addicts then completed the programme successfully and upon return, they vowed never to touch the drugs again and they further agreed to work with SAPS in the area in order to strengthen their campaigns especially at schools which are mostly affected by the scourge of drugs.

MEC Ngomane applauded the move saying it will obviously have a positive impact on government's crime prevention initiatives. The MEC further called on the community to continue supporting the volunteers so that they do not relapse and go back to their old destructive ways.

He further called on parents whose children are on drugs to work with government and relevant institutions so that assistance is provided. He pleaded with the business community to assist the youth by providing employment opportunities and even mentor them so that they do not fall into the drug trap.

According to the Community, Nyaope remains a challenge in the area because communities have also alleged that most housebreakings are being perpetuated by drug addicts who attempt to feed their addiction. They have appealed for the arrest of drug peddlers saying it is sometimes pointless to keep arresting users when dealers are not arrested.

The community believes that arresting drug peddlers would assist in eradicating the scourge of Nyaope in the area and this will impact positively on government's effort to eradicate crime. Proliferation of drugs in schools is one of the concerns that residents complained about during the MEC's public participation programme [Imbizo].

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