

# SAMA MEDIA STATEMENT



## SAMA URGES CONTINUED VIGILANCE AS MPOX THREAT PERSISTS IN AFRICA

Pretoria, 18 August 2024

The South African Medical Association (SAMA) continues to support the call for public vigilance following the confirmation of additional Monkeypox (Mpox) cases across Africa, as reported by the World Health Organization (WHO). While the number of cases in South Africa remains limited, the potential for wider transmission necessitates sustained awareness and precautionary measures.

As of the most recent WHO External Situation Report, 12 African countries have reported laboratory-confirmed Mpox cases. The total number of cases in Africa has now more than 15 600 and 537<sup>1</sup> deaths, underscoring the importance of regional cooperation in managing the spread of this virus. The report also highlights potential and risk of cross-border transmission in the continent.

Mpox, caused by the monkeypox virus (MPXV), is a viral zoonosis with symptoms including fever, rash, and swollen lymph nodes, often accompanied by other complications. While the virus is not as easily transmitted between humans as some other pathogens, close contact with an infected individual or contaminated materials poses a significant risk. The fatality rate, though low, remains a concern, particularly for vulnerable populations.

WHO continues to emphasise the need for heightened surveillance and rapid response mechanisms to mitigate the spread of Mpox, especially in regions with weaker healthcare infrastructure. In South Africa, the National Department of Health (NDoH) is working closely with the NICD to implement WHO-recommended protocols, including rigorous contact tracing and quarantine measures.

SAMA urges all healthcare professionals and the general public to remain vigilant. Given the mobility between African countries, the potential impact on South Africa should not be underestimated. We encourage ongoing cooperation with public health authorities and adherence to guidelines to prevent the escalation of cases.

SAMA stresses the importance of isolation for those infected and close monitoring of any suspected cases. Public education campaigns will be vital in ensuring that communities understand the risks and necessary precautions.

As the situation evolves, SAMA will continue to monitor developments and provide updates. Our priority remains the health and safety of all South Africans and supporting global efforts to control the spread of Mpox.

(ENDS)

### Notes to Editors

About SAMA: The South African Medical Association ("SAMA") was established in 1927 and became known as it is today through the unification of a variety of doctors' groups on 21 May 1998 that had

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.who.int/news/item/14-08-2024-who-director-general-declares-mpox-outbreak-a-public-health-emergency-of-international-concern>

represented a diversity of interests. SAMA is a non-statutory, professional association for public and private sector medical practitioners. SAMA is registered a non-profit company in terms of the Companies Act. SAMA is a voluntary membership association, existing to serve the best interests and needs of its members in all healthcare-related matters.

**Contact:**

Dr Mzulungile Theo Nodikida  
CEO: SAMA  
Mobile: 082 927 9106  
Email: [communications@samedical.org](mailto:communications@samedical.org)

**Spokesperson 1**

Chairperson: SAMA  
Dr Mvuyisi Mzukwa

**Spokesperson 2**

Vice-Chairperson: SAMA  
Prof A Dhai