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## COMMUNITY & SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL  
KZN 435



Partnering with the Department of Health and Department of Social Development and other key strategic partners, Umzimkhulu Municipality ongoingly provides guidance to the wards on how to be conscious of the HIV AIDS. The annual World AIDS Day held on every 1<sup>st</sup> of December each is an opportunity for people worldwide to unite in the fight against HIV, to show their support for people living with HIV and to remember people who have died because of AIDS. World AIDS Day is the first ever global health day and the first one was held in 1988.

Stigma associated with HIV and AIDS including the resulting discrimination can be as devastating as the illness itself: abandonment by spouse and/or family, social ostracism, job and property loss, school expulsion, denial of medical services, lack of care and support, and violence are some of the results. Discrimination must be seen in the broader context of human rights. Observance of this day provides an opportunity for government, non-governmental organization, church, community organizations and individual to demonstrate the importance of the fight against HIV and AIDS and TB. This always marks the beginning of a certain phase of the year- long effort comprising of community dialogues, social activations, mass media and provision of comprehensive health and social services. The main thrust for World AIDS Day messages is to encourage citizens and residents of South Africa to test for

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HIV, at least, once every year as proposed by the National Strategic Plan for HIV & AIDS, STI and TB. A massive campaign to encourage men to undergo medical male circumcision will also be emphasized.

In 2019, 94 100 people in the Harry Gwala District Municipality were infected with HIV. This reflects an increase at an average annual rate of 1.53% since 2009, and in 2019 represented 18.62% of the district municipality's total population. Due numerous reasons Umzimkhulu also commands an alarming statistic from the above-mentioned percentages. The council of this rural based municipality, under the leadership of Hnr. Mayor Cllr. Jabulile Mzizi took sober resolution to create an enabling environment for an integrated approach towards fighting this pandemic with its elements. Ongoingly, Umzimkhulu Municipality leads programs that seek to curb the wild spread of this pandemic and further capacitate its communities. This is done through partnerships with different stakeholders and social partners. Recently , this program was done in Zone 5 whereby the Methodist Church became a strategic social partner hence Department of Social Development was present as well.