

Post-Traumatic stress for children and traffic officers, who witnessed decapitated bodies from Empangeni horrific road accident: Duma pioneering trauma-informed care and other interventions in Umtubatuba Local Municipality

Media Advisory and statement by the MEC for Transport and Human Settlements, Siboniso Duma

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Inkosi Mhlabunzima Maphumulo House: We have reached the final stage of our week of mourning as we lay to rest nine church members who died in a horrific accident along the N2 in Empangeni on Mother's Day.

Having assigned a team of senior managers from the Department to be with the families from day one, we are satisfied with the support extended to all affected families and the preparations for the funeral.

The funeral is taking place at 10h00 Silethukukhanya High School in Ward 03, Umtubatuba Local Municipality.

In particular, we wish to draw the attention of the media to the following activities:

1. Mkhwanazi Family: This is a child-headed household following the death of Mama Winnie Nobuhle Mkhwanazi (52) on Mother's Day. The children are now orphans with no source of income. To complicate matters, children are living in abject poverty and in a dilapidated mud house. Tomorrow, we will announce interventions by the Department of Human Settlements.
2. First Debriefing with Traffic Officers: We will interact with traffic officers who witnessed decapitated bodies. We are fast-tracking professional counselling to enable officers to manage mental health challenges such as depression, anxiety, flashbacks, nightmares, and intense emotional distress.

Studies have revealed that traffic officers who are exposed to gruesome collision scenes are likely to be involved in substance abuse, femicide, and gender-based violence. This is due to stress.

As the Department, we value our officers. It is for this reason we want to take care of their well-being and their families.

Ends

Enquiries

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