

# REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

**STATEMENT BY DR. KALUMBI SHANGULA, MINISTER OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES ON THE FURTHER RECOVERY FROM COVID-19.**

**15 MAY 2020**

**WINDHOEK**

*\*Check Against Delivery*

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1. This year, Covid-19 has dominated every aspect of our lives. Covid-19 has managed to do what many other diseases failed to do, and that is to upset both social and economic life of all societies. Its impact on health, education and on the economy is unparalleled. Who could have imagined a year ago that learners and teachers would be sent home this year because of Covid-19? Who could have imagined last year that this year the universities would be closed due to Covid-19? Even with Covid-19 it does also not mean that other diseases would take leave because Covid-19 has come on the scene. And this is a challenge to the Ministry of Health and Social Services: to cope with Covid-19 and at the same time to continue with existing health programmes.
2. The Ministry of Health and Social Services declared an outbreak of Hepatitis E in Namibia in December 2017. Hepatitis E is still persisting in Namibia to date. Hepatitis E, as we know by now, is a liver disease caused by an infection with hepatitis E virus. Hepatitis E is transmitted through stool of someone who has the virus. It is common in environment where there is poor handwashing habit and lack of clean water. The control of Hepatitis E has greatly benefitted from interventions against Covid-19. We are now seeing fewer cases of Hepatitis E in Namibia as a result. As we continue the fight against Covid-19, we are killing two birds with one stone.
3. Malaria is another disease that is of great public health importance. On the 18<sup>th</sup> August 2018, the Heads of State and Government of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) signed the Windhoek Declaration on Eliminating Malaria in the SADC Region. Malaria is caused by parasites that are carried by mosquitoes. The mosquitoes breed in pools of water. Last year, Namibia experienced severe drought. Therefore, the mosquitoes could not breed and as a result, we had few cases of malaria. This year, Namibia experienced good rain. We are now seeing an upsurge in the number of malaria cases in the northern health districts. The fight against malaria requires the cooperation of the public to institute personal protective measures against mosquito bites. We call on the public to be aware of the danger of malaria, in the middle of Covid-19 and act as required.
4. Today I announce yet another recovery of Case No 7 from Covid-19, which brings the total number of recoveries to 13. The rest of update on Covid-19 is as follow:
  - Confirmed Cases: 16
  - Recoveries: 13
  - Active Cases: 3
  - Deaths: 0
  - Total tested: 2 074
  - Total tested yesterday 129
  - Results: Negative
  - Total contacts: 243
  - Total quarantine: 1 258
  - Total number discharged: 680
  - Total in quarantine: 578
5. My message today to the public and the health workers is that, as we fight Covid-19, let us not be oblivious of other diseases that are of public health importance. I thank my fellow health workers for the role they continue to play in ensuring the health security of the Namibians.

