First case of #Covid-19 in South Africa

The Minister of Health, Dr Zweli Mkhize, has confirmed the first case of Covid-19 in South Africa.

Health Minister, Zweli Mkhize

"This morning, Thursday, March 5, the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) confirmed that a suspected case of Covid-19 has tested positive. The patient is a 38-year-old male, who travelled to Italy with his wife. They were part of a group of 10 people and they arrived back in South Africa on 1 March 2020," tweeted the minister on his official account.

The patient consulted a private general practitioner on 3 March with symptoms of fever, headache, malaise, a sore throat and a cough. The practice nurse took swabs and delivered it to the lab.

The patient has been self-isolating since 3 March. The couple also has two children.

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"The tracer team has been deployed to KwaZulu-Natal with epidemiologists and clinicians from National Institute of Communicable Diseases. The doctor has been self-isolating as well.

"The Emergency Operating Centre (EOC) has identified the contacts by interviewing the patient and doctor," said Mkhize.

Following the Parliamentary debate, the minister will hold a media briefing to ensure that the public is immediately kept abreast.

"A press briefing will be held later after the parliamentary debate this evening to shed more light on this issue," said Mkhize.