

Second wave hits SA

It's official. With rapidly rising numbers ahead of the holiday season, South Africa has hit the anticipated second wave of Covid-19 infections, health minister Zweli Mkhize said in a briefing on Wednesday night.



Health minister Zweli Mkhize

"We are now entering a second wave. It is important for us to highlight that four provinces – Western Cape, Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng – are the key drivers of this new wave. We look at the number of tests done, the positivity rate, the number of positive cases, the percentage positive, the numbers of people who are admitted, and the number of fatalities. All of these together must show an indication of an increase on a week-to-week period over a seven-day period. We then conclude that there is an increase," he said.

“ Four provinces are showing major increases in positive [#COVID19](#) cases: Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. We are now in a [#SecondWave](#) pic.twitter.com/OYrAxcGc32 — Dr Zweli Mkhize (@DrZweliMkhize) [December 9, 2020](#) ”

The majority of the new cases are from Western Cape, and that is 30% of positive cases today, followed by Eastern Cape (24%), KZN (23%) and Gauteng (17%).

"Since the end of September we had actually seen most of our numbers coming down to as low as 1,000, but now the numbers are increasing... Today, we have breached the 6,000 mark in terms of new cases. The total new cases identified is 6,079," Mkhize said.

Super-spreader events

There is also concern over matric year-end parties acting as Covid-19 super-spreader events.

“ Parents seized by guilt as 1,300 Gauteng teens urged to quarantine after attending Ballito Rage <https://t.co/Alx88KZ4To> — Sunday Times (@SundayTimesZA) [December 8, 2020](#) ”

"In the past few days, the age distribution has also shown a different pattern from the norm. The peak age at this period is

now 15 to 19 years of age. This is a new issue and this is what is most worrying. It is believed to be due to a number of large parties with young people drinking alcohol with no adherence to non-pharmaceutical interventions. We have had a report from KZN where you could see this pattern is much more widespread than previously thought.

"If this trajectory continues, our healthcare systems will be overwhelmed. Hence, part of the recommendations being tabled by provinces are now looking at how to contain these large gatherings and parties. The decision will be made by the NCCC," he said.

Provincial mobilisation

"The key issues we have raised for the provinces include that they need to ensure that testing turnaround times are as quick as possible to facilitate patient flow, to assess the bed capacities, and attending to staff and equipment needs urgently. As we are moving around in various provinces, we are seeing the pressure has built up in a number of provinces," Mkhize said.

“ Dr Zweli Mkhize outlines provincial plans to prepare for a [#COVID19 #SecondWave](#) pic.twitter.com/rnK4zrptdA— Dr Zweli Mkhize (@DrZweliMkhize) [December 9, 2020](#) ”

"Yes, festive season is time for us to relax and enjoy with our families but we now need to understand that we have a responsibility to enjoy with various restraints. If our enjoyment is going to lead to more people getting sick, getting admitted and even some losing lives, it is not a responsible way of enjoying ourselves. We need to prepare for a festive season with a difference," he said.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>