

COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF LAIKIPIA



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PRESS STATEMENT

Cervical cancer is one of the most preventable and treatable forms of cancer. But the disease continues to rob us of our wives, mothers, sisters, daughters and grandmothers. It continues to threaten the core fabric of our society due to the astronomical cost of treating the disease once it sets in for most of our households.

In Kenya, it is a primary cause of cancer deaths among women. Almost all women are at risk of cervical cancer, because the human papillomavirus (HPV), which causes cervical cancer, is very prevalent. It is estimated that nine women die from cervical cancer every day. These women often present with symptoms when it's too late for treatment to be effective.

Notably, cervical cancer is treatable and can be prevented through the HPV vaccine, available free of charge in Kenya for 10-year-old girls.

A major point of emphasis is that routine cervical cancer screening for women can help prevent its degeneration to acute stages that are beyond treatment. Basically, for cervical cancer early detection is key to the ability to treat it. If detected early, cervical cancer is one of the most successfully treatable cancers.

To enhance the capacity for early detection and treatment, it is imperative that screening happens at the lowest level of medical contact. In line with our focus on preventative health care as a core foundation of our Universal Health Care (UHC) model, we have been improving the diagnostic capacity of all the sixty-three (63) dispensaries and fifteen (15) level 3 hospitals across the county.

They now have the capacity to carry out cervical cancer screening among many other diseases. These facilities are close and accessible to our women anywhere within the county.

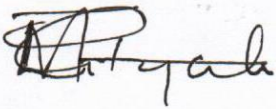
It is in this view that the Ministry of Health will tomorrow launch the Cervical Cancer Awareness month here in Laikipia County. We are honoured and delighted to be the host to such a key event that speaks to the heart of rolling out UHC as part of the Agenda 4 items that are the National Governments commitment to ensure better health for all its citizens.

We shall hold a cervical cancer screening exercise at **Nturukuma Dispensary in Nanyuki Ward tomorrow, Tuesday, 19/01/2021 at 8.15 am**, to commence the activities that mark this year's national cervical awareness week.

Later in the day we shall congregate at Nanyuki Teaching and Referral Hospitals for a series of speeches and events which will culminate with a walk to the Central Park in Nanyuki, where voluntary screening and other medical related activities will take place.

At Central Park and in recognition of the central role played by Community Health Volunteers (CHVs) in the articulation of the UHC, there shall be a presentation of forty (40) motorcycles to facilitate their work. CHVs are critical components of our UHC model. They are very instrumental in winning the war against cervical cancer and other diseases. Cervical cancer will be an agenda as they carry health education across the county on a door-to-door initiative.

We have a unique opportunity to prevent generations of women from suffering from a preventable disease. It is easier and cheaper to treat cervical cancer if detected early. We all have a role to play in cervical cancer prevention.



Muchiri Gitonga
Director, Communications