The Western Cape Minister of Health, Mr Theuns Botha, officially launched the Road to Health Booklet (RTHB) at Mowbray Maternity Hospital on 31 May 2011.

The booklet, issued to parents and guardians, is currently used across the world by health staff to monitor and record the health of children. The aim of the booklet is to give an accurate record of a child’s health and development and will assist in identifying those children who need extra care. Routine and regular growth monitoring is the easiest and quickest method available for the early detection of disease or developmental and nutritional problems, and for the positive reinforcement of behaviours that promote growth in children.

The booklet also contains additional information that every parent needs to know: How to feed the child; When the child should visit the child health clinic for routine care such as measles immunisation; How to manage basic problems such as diarrhoea at home, and when to take a child for medical help.

Minister Botha said, “Rather than directing our budget for more patients, we are setting our sights on the prevention and early detection of disease. Research has shown the importance of healthy early childhood development and its impact on society as a whole in the child’s later life. This is an opportunity to uplift the quality of our children’s future.”

“In this long term vision the Road to Health booklet, is a really important tool. It will enable us to detect and treat disease at a very early stage, which will be less costly than the treatment of serious diseases at a later stage in a child’s life. Personally I am very excited about this development. Now it is the parent or caregiver’s responsibility to ensure that every baby’s booklet is filled out,” says Minister Theuns Botha.
POSITIVE STAFF MEMBERS
Now we are in the middle of winter and that means that we are treating more patients, but we also need to look after our own immunity. I urge you to dress warmly and keep your spirits up. The warmer weather will emerge again soon!

I have visited some of our facilities in the past months, and I am encouraged to meet and speak to the people who work for the Western Cape Department of Health. Despite working in conditions that are not always favourable, you have managed to keep the ship at sea and change its direction. All the reports demonstrate that our department is showing great progress with the implementation of health programmes. I refer to the roll-out of the HIV Counseling and Testing campaign, the launch of the Road to Health Booklet, the mop-up vaccination campaign, to name but a few.

EXCEPTIONAL LEADERSHIP RECOGNISED
Much of the success of our department can be ascribed to the astounding leadership shown by our Head of Health, Professor Househam, and now his exceptional drive has been recognized by business and government across the country.

On Thursday, 23 June 2011, Prof Househam was awarded the Top Performing Government Leader Award at the Annual African Access Business Awards held at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg. The awards is considered the premier awards event for South African businesses. The annual awards ceremony recognises and honours the top performers of the year in both business and industry and government.

In the past ten years Prof Househam has been a driving force behind the many positive changes made to the health landscape in the Western Cape. Healthcare 2010 was his brainchild, and under his leadership the Department has implemented policies and programmes that have led to many improvements in service delivery and patient experience.

Professor Househam and the department deserve this public acknowledgement and recognition for your entrepreneurship and out-of-the-box thinking. You work under difficult circumstances and the public demand is overwhelming at times. You have displayed exemplary innovation over a long period of time and above all, our employees are succeeding in implementing these innovations from top management levels right through to every health facility in the rural areas of this province. You have done us proud.

Theuns Botha
MINISTER OF HEALTH: WESTERN CAPE
As I write this message the days are becoming shorter and it has been cold and raining in the province bringing with it misery for the many people in the Western Cape living in poor housing, threatened by flooding on the one hand and by fires on the other. Health bears the consequences of this situation with an increase in particularly respiratory illnesses and unfortunately also burns, in particular of children from these poor housing communities.

The good news from the past summer is the significant reduction of the number of children presenting to health facilities with diarrhea. It is particularly heartening that far fewer children died from diarrheal disease this summer. This is a major achievement that results from excellent cooperation between local government and the provincial department demonstrating the importance of cooperation and dealing with those factors that promote disease, such as in the case of diarrheal disease clean water, refuse removal and easy access to primary treatment.

The province has also achieved its target to test and counsel 1.1 million people in the province before the end of June 2011 with regard to HIV and AIDS but also including screening for TB and chronic disease such as diabetes and hypertension. This is another major achievement that begins to address the reduction of the burden of disease by making people aware of the risks of an unhealthy lifestyle and hopefully beginning to get people to assume responsibility for their own health. This is the start of a partnership between the health services and the communities on which we should build and through which we can together increase wellness in the province.

The departmental 2010/2011 annual report was submitted recently and the department is in the midst of the annual audit process. Whilst stressful the audit of financial, human resource and performance information has indicated that there is progress in these areas although there is still a way to go particularly related to the management of performance information. I trust that when you read the next issue of Jonga I will be able to report an unqualified audit for the Western Cape Department of Health.

Values workshops have been held for over 200 managers to kick-start a process in the Department of Health to begin to address staff attitudes with the aim of improving the quality of service delivery. The Department is striving to become both an employer of choice in the health sector and a health provider of choice for communities in the Western Cape. This is a big ask but in my view it is not an impossible goal. As management we have agreed to address many of the negative aspects identified in our organization by our employees themselves such as rigid procedures, blame culture, long hours and bureaucracy. In return we trust that the staff will respond to this initiative and as management we look forward to taking hands with all our staff in moving to a better future for both our staff and patients.

My best wishes to all the staff of the department and their families. Keep warm and safe both at work and at home!

Professor Craig Househam
HOD: WESTERN CAPE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

DEPARTMENT of HEALTH
Provincial Government of the Western Cape
Nurses at the Nelson’s Creek wine farm listening attentively while
being addressed by Professor Craig Househam, Western Cape
Head of Health.

Florence Nightingale laid the foundation for professional nursing with the establishment of her nursing school at St Thomas’ Hospital in London in 1860. This was the first secular nursing school in the world. The nursing pledge taken by new nurses was named in her honour, and the annual International Nurses’ Day is celebrated around the world on her birthday, 12 May. This year’s theme for International Nurses’ Day 2011 was: CLOSING THE GAP: INCREASING ACCESS AND EQUITY.

The Western Cape Department of Health commemorated this special day by hosting an event at the Nelson’s Creek wine farm in the Boland.Acknowledged at the event for their hard work and commitment, approximately 600 nurses were in stitches watching an entertaining skit by students from the University of Stellenbosch on HIV and AIDS.

Professor Craig Househam, Head of Health in the Western Cape, expressed his heartfelt thanks to all nurses in the department for their selfless dedication and reiterated that half of the workforce of the Western Cape Department of Health are nurses and that we are dependant on them in all health facilities.

HEAD OF HEALTH RECEIVES TOP GOVERNMENT AWARD

Prof Craig Househam, Head of Health in the Western Cape, won the Top Performing Government Leader Award at the Annual African Access Business Awards held at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg on 23 June 2011.

The awards is considered the premier awards event for South African businesses. The annual awards ceremony recognises and honours the top performers of the year in both business and industry and government.

Prof Househam has been a driving force behind the many positive changes made to the health landscape in the Western Cape since he took over in 2001. Since the approval of his brainchild, Healthcare 2010, the department has implemented policies and programmes that have led to many improvements in service delivery and patient experience.

“The award we received is testament of a team of experts working well within a unit. Winning this award demonstrates that we are moving in the right direction when it comes to providing healthcare to our citizens. We have offered much of ourselves and going forward we will offer even more,” said Professor Househam.

Prof Househam with his Top Performing Government Leader Award.
Mr Theuns Botha, Western Cape Minister of Health, officially opened the new Kwanokuthula Community Day Centre (CDC) in Plettenberg Bay on 18 April 2011.

This brings closer access to quality healthcare to the community of Kwanokuthula. The new facility will render primary healthcare services to more than 46 000 people in the Bitou District by offering services ranging from antenatal/postnatal care; cervical screenings; the management of child health, mental health, sexually transmitted infections, HIV and AIDS, TB and of chronic diseases; to curative and pharmaceutical services. The facility is also able to stabilise emergency patients before referring them to the Knysna Provincial Hospital.

Minister Botha, said, “this is the largest clinic that Western Cape Provincial Government has introduced in the past two years - a R35 million project. In the process of this project, 180 job opportunities were created”.

“The project is an excellent example of good co-operation between the Department of Health, the Department of Public Works and the private sector."

With the Melkhoutfontein Clinic in Stilbaai due for completion in May this year, the Witlokasie Community Health Centre in Knysna that is set for completion in June 2013, we have certainly come a long way to bring facilities closer to the people living here. As for the status of hospitals in the area, the Knysna Hospital will undergo upgrades in the next two years and, in George, the Harry Comay TB Hospital: ARV Clinic and Ward upgrade is set for completion at the end of this year.”

With a compliment of 30 staff members and fitted with the latest technology in X-ray imaging, dental equipment etc, the new CDC will ultimately improve the patients’ experience when visiting this facility.

The Western Cape Minister of Health, Mr Theuns Botha, officially opened the new Paarl Forensic Pathology Laboratory on 10 June 2011.

The new facility is on the premises of the TC Newman Community Day Centre in Paarl East, and will serve the communities of Paarl, Paarl East, Franschhoek, Groot Drakenstein, Wellington, Klapmuts, Mbekweni and Philadelphia; it will also manage referral cases from the greater geographic area that it supports.

The new laboratory has a more spacious waiting area, increased storage facilities, a larger dissection area, private interview facilities, more advanced equipment to ensure improved service delivery and better amenities for personnel and members of the public.

Minister Theuns Botha officially opened the Paarl Forensic Pathology Laboratory on 10 June 2011.
SMILE-GIVING SURGERY AT RED CROSS FOR THE FIRST TIME

A little girl, Almaze *, can smile again thanks to the facial reanimation surgery she underwent at Red Cross War Memorial Children’s Hospital (RCWMCH) on 22 March 2011.

It was the first time such surgery was performed at the hospital. Almaze has congenital facial palsy, which left the right side of her face partially paralysed, making it impossible for her to display any form of facial expression.

The surgery was part of a partnership between RCWMCH and the Smile Foundation, a NGO which helps children with facial abnormalities to access free corrective plastic and reconstructive surgery within South Africa. It also runs a skills development programme, creating training platforms to teach surgeons how to correct facial abnormalities.

During the surgery Prof George Psaras, removed a muscle from Almaze’s thigh and transplanted it into her cheek after which he reattached the muscle’s nerves and arteries to its new home.

The surgery outcome could only be judged after two months when, Almaze was able to display her first real smile.

*Almaze’s surname is being withheld to protect her privacy.

PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT AFTER DISABILITY INTERNSHIP

The Western Cape Department of Health has proven its commitment to improve its current employment profile from 0.34% to 2% for persons with disabilities.

Funding received from the Services Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) has been utilised to provide training for an accredited Business Administration qualification aligned to competencies required for employment in the post of administration clerk.

The establishment of a conducive environment for the employment of persons with disabilities was a key element to ensuring a successful internship. This support included the provision of reasonable accommodation and sensitisation training to break stereotypes.

A total of 42 persons with disabilities graduated from the learnership and were placed on a 12-month internship within the department.

To date, a total of 84% of the interns have successfully completed the internship and will be permanently employed within the department.

Moira Gerszt, CEO of the Smile Foundation, and Prof George Psaras who performed the surgery.

Bernadette Ariès, Chief Director: Human Resources Management, with Amanda Petersen, a former intern who has been permanently employed within the Transformation Directorate.
VALKENBERG HOSTED FORENSIC MENTAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

Valkenberg Hospital hosted its second academic Forensic Mental Health Conference from 20 - 21 April 2011, at the hospitals Education Centre. The event formed part of the hospitals 120 Year Anniversary Celebrations this year, and was targeted at professionals with an interest in forensic mental health and the challenges faced by mental health service users in the criminal justice system.

The conference was hosted by Professor Sean Kaliski, the Provincial Head of Forensic Psychiatry for the Western Cape, in conjunction with the University of Cape Town’s (UCT) Department of Psychiatry.

The Forensic Mental Health Conference is the second event of its kind in the Province. It enabled stakeholders and professionals working in forensic mental health services to share their knowledge and good practices, and provided an opportunity to network and build collaborative partnerships. The research presented will help build the evidence-base for effective practice and stimulate innovation, and will therefore drive service improvement in the country.

The Minister of Health in the Western Cape, Theuns Botha, shared his views on the event: “A conference of this nature will stimulate future research and nurture an environment for the academic pursuit of knowledge in mental health matters. It will also generate innovation and provide a platform for sharing good practice, which will help the Department and Valkenberg Hospital to achieve its goal of delivering a quality health care service to the communities it serves.”

The general impetus for the conference was generated through an international collaboration to develop mental health services in South Africa. In 2008, the Forensic Department at Valkenberg Hospital was awarded the NRF-KISC grant to support this international collaboration. Recognising the paucity of local systems and infrastructure, the aim of the collaboration is to develop local capacity in forensic mental health services. This will be achieved by promoting stronger and more cooperative relationships between local and international partners.

Valkenberg Hospital forms part of the UCT’s teaching platform and will be able to meet its objective of facilitating training in Forensic Psychiatry. With the involvement of UCT, the conference raised the profile of the hospital and the service both locally and internationally.

PHARMACIST’S ASSISTANT CONFERENCE 2011

The inaugural Pharmacist’s Assistant Conference was held on 27 May 2011 at the Newlands Southern Sun Hotel.

The keynote speaker, Dr Keith Cloete, Chief Director: District Health Services, sketched the 2020 plan of the Department of Health, emphasising the important role the Pharmacist Assistant’s had to play in this role. The rest of the conference consisted of a combination of lectures and interactive sessions which kept the guests involved.

The conference culminated with the Western Cape Department of Health’s Pharmacist’s Assistant of the Year award dinner. The evening had a Bollywood theme and the guests rose to the occasion by dressing in brightly coloured saris’ and other Indian costumes, creating a wonderful atmosphere.

Magdalene Klaasen, from the Dr Abdurahman Community Health Centre, walked away with the much sought-after Pharmacist’s Assistant award.

Dr Cloete (left) with Magdalene Klaasen, winner of the Pharmacist’s Assistant 2011 Award.
This section has been created just for you. In the coming weeks and months we will share interesting stories, lessons and puzzles with you. If you look below, we challenge all non speaking Xhosa people to learn these simple words below - it is a follow-up to the first lesson. The second Xhosa lesson is brought to you by Fiki Magqashe-La, Head of the Language unit within the Communications Directorate.

GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH XHOSA 2

Terms and phrases to be remembered:

Molweni kwakhona
Hallo again

I will not be able to test you, therefore I would like you to test your knowledge. Write down the following 3 sentences in English before we continue:

Uhlala phi?
Ndiyagoduka.
Uya phi ngoku?

Our second lesson:
The use of a dash sign before or after a verb/word.

The use of a dash sign preceding or following a verb/word.
- YA (-stands for a first person in singular form or first person in a plural form and also for a second person, as well as third person. The stem does not change, see the following examples).

Ndiya emsebenzini = I am going to work (Ndi = I, but can not stand on its own as in English)
Siya emsebenzini = We are going to work (Si = we)
Uya emsebenzini = He/she is going to work (U = he/she)
Niya emsebenzini = You are going to work (Ni = you: plural form)
Baya emsebenzini = They are going to work (Ba = they and all these affixes precedes a verb to give meaning. Do you see how ya remains in all the instances?)

Now we look at meanings of NGA- (nga followed by a dash)

Nga- = by
Nga- = with
Nga- = about
Nga- = at
Nga- = on
Nga- = in

I hope you enjoyed the lesson. Next time, we are going to use Nga- in context.

Thank you / Enkosi!, Sakubonana!