



## MINISTRY OF HEALTH

### MEDIA BRIEFING

Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2025

LUSAKA

Good morning fellow country men and women,

Allow me to take this opportunity to update you on the current public health threats in the country, specifically the ongoing Cholera and Mpox outbreaks. I am aware that there have been some unverified rumours that Zambia has recorded an Ebola case, and I wish to categorically state and have it placed on record that Zambia **has not recorded any cases of Ebola**.

#### **Cholera**

In the last 24hours, **we did not record any new cholera cases** around the country. The cumulative number of cases stands at 351. Of the 351 cases, 265 were recorded on the Copperbelt, 47 in Lusaka, 27 in Muchinga, 7 in Central, 4 in North-western, and 1 in Eastern. We have discharged a total of 342 patients. Sadly, the current outbreak claimed nine lives (seven of these deaths unfortunately occurred in the community). We do not currently have any cases in admission at our Cholera Treatment Centres.

Encouragingly, we have not recorded any deaths in over 40 days. The last death was recorded on 8th February 2025.

Government has taken the decision to carry out vaccination campaigns. So far, 675,441 people have been vaccinated with oral cholera vaccine in Nakonde (200,878), Chililabombwe (133,525) and Kitwe (341,038). Further, the Ministry has received authorisation to start vaccination in Lusaka cholera hotspots.

The government remains committed to ensuring effective cholera response while maintaining routine healthcare services. The Cholera Treatment Centres have been established to provide specialised care for cholera cases, ensuring rapid treatment,

infection control, and reduced transmission within communities. These centres are strategically set up to manage cholera cases separately from general healthcare facilities, preventing the disruption of essential health services such as maternal care, child immunisation, and management of chronic conditions. By isolating and effectively treating cholera patients, Cholera Treatment Centres help to protect the broader healthcare system while ensuring that all citizens continue to receive the care they need.

We urge the public to seek care at designated Cholera Treatment Centres if experiencing symptoms of cholera and to follow prevention measures, including safe water use, proper sanitation, and early medical intervention.

### **Mpox**

In the past week we recorded seven new cases as follows:

- i. Copperbelt: three new cases from Ndola (2) and Lufwanyama (1)
- ii. Muchinga: two new cases from Chinsali
- iii. Lusaka: two new cases from Chipata sub-district

The cumulative total number of cases recorded countrywide now stands at **31 reported from Lusaka province (17); Copperbelt (10); Muchinga (2); Central (1); and Western (1).**

Sadly, we have recorded the first Mpox-related death of an 8 month old infant at Chipata Level I Hospital. A comprehensive mortality review meeting has been held to ascertain the cause of death. This was concluded to have been complicated pneumonia in a known Mpox patient.

Continued capacity building through trainings and mentorship for frontline health workers is being done to avert future deaths. Other key control and containment measures being instituted include active case search, contact tracing, risk communication and community engagement, and prepositioning of supplies. We have also continued to hold weekly co-ordination meetings between government and partners to strengthen collaborative efforts for the response.

The Ministry of Health has remained steadfast in ensuring that the all districts had cholera preparedness and response plans that ensured timely response to cholera outbreak control using a multisectoral One-Health approach.

I urge the public to adhere to the recommended public health and social measures such as hand hygiene, safe water, good sanitation and seeking treatment early.

In closing, I wish to urge our citizens to remain vigilant and take necessary precautions to prevent the spread of cholera and Mpox. If you or someone you know experience symptoms of either disease, seek immediate care at the nearest health facility or Cholera Treatment Centre for prompt and effective treatment.

Let us all play our part by **practicing good hygiene, drinking safe water, maintaining proper sanitation, and avoiding close contact with suspected mpox cases**. Together, we can stop the spread of these diseases and protect the health of our communities. **Your health is our priority—act now to stay safe!**

Hon. Dr Elijah J. Muchima, MP.

**Minister of Health**