

Tuesday, November 26, 2019



## DPW raise awareness about HIV/Aids fight



**SHOWING SUPPORT:** DPW Wellness Unit members hold a candle light prayer in remembrance of those who have lost their lives to HIV/Aids, and those living with the virus, for World Aids Day Picture: SUPPLIED

The Wellness Unit of the department of public works held a build-up event for World Aids Day in Middledrift, under the theme “Ending the HIV/Aids community”. A candle light prayer was also held to show support to those affected by the virus. Wellness practitioner Nwabisa Malgas said the event’s purpose was to honour those who had passed away and to give hope to those living with the virus.

“We are honouring our people who have lost their battle with the virus and we are also standing in solidarity with those who still continue living with HIV/Aids, by encouraging them to live a healthy lifestyle and take their medication accordingly,” Malgas said.

Most of the people attending the event were accelerated professional and trade competency development programme (APTCoD) learners.

“As the Wellness Unit, we felt it was important to bring the educational session to this particular depot as this would equip the learners with the necessary life skills needed to combat the spread of HIV/Aids,” Malgas explained.

She said peer educators from Middledrift had organised the event and had invited nurses from local clinics to conduct a candle light prayer.

Wellness Unit assistant director Zoliswa Soso said their mandate was to ensure all public works employees were in

good health, in order to minimise absenteeism. “We have observed over time that there are undesirable behaviours among employees that are becoming a problem including alcohol abuse, financial burdens and absenteeism and it is our responsibility to tackle these issues without favour or prejudice,” Soso said.

DPW’s Wellness Unit promotes the management of HIV/Aids, diabetes and cancer, along with other illnesses, and provides a supportive environment for affected or infected employees.

“As long as HIV/Aids is around, we will all be around to assist and educate those in need by providing the necessary educational information, together with a support base that will equip employees in better understanding the virus,” she said. She reminded the audience that the event was not to judge anyone but served as a reminder that HIV/Aids was real and had to be taken seriously.

“Ours is not to tell you how to live your life but purely to make you aware of the risks associated with making reckless decisions that will eventually affect those around you. “Under this theme, we can make a difference and bring change to the people around us if we stand together in the fight against HIV/Aids,” Soso said.