



19 August 2024

STATEMENT REGARDING M POX OUTBREAK IN DRC AND ADJACENT COUNTRIES

Dear faculty member / delegate

The congress organising committee has noted the WHO declaration of M Pox as a public health emergency. We have sought an opinion from Professor Lucille Bloomberg, emeritus professor of communicable diseases and public health at Wits University and Deputy Director of the South African institute of communicable diseases. Her CV can be [viewed here](#) for reference.

In summary, the following facts are pertinent:

1. South Africa has not yet reported a single case of the more severe clade1 M Pox infection. We have a diminishing number of positive cases of clade 2 M Pox (although this may reflect the mild nature of the disease and consequent non-presentation to the healthcare system).
2. Virtually all cases of infection and all case fatalities in Africa (irrespective of clade) are occurring in severely ill or immunocompromised individuals.
3. All infections have occurred in patients who have had intimate contact with infected individuals or those sharing the same bed for a prolonged period.
4. The virus has a low infectivity.
5. There is no risk of respiratory spread or spread due to transient skin contact.
6. There is no need for vaccination or mass screening except for susceptible individuals (e.g. untreated HIV) from high incidence environments.

Prof Bloomberg's unequivocal advice is to travel to SA for the conference without any anxiety regarding M Pox.

Yours sincerely

Anthony

Anthony Beeton
Chairman LOC SASA AAAC 2024