

MEDIA STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF HEALTH, DR JOE PHAAHLA ON THE OCASSION OF MEDIA BRIFING TO PROVIDE AN UPDATE ON THE RECENT COVID-19 DEVELOPMENTS

Tuesday, 10 January 2023

The Department of Health and its entities have been monitoring developments with regard to Covid-19 globally all the time since we uplifted all restrictions in June 2022. Genomic Surveillance has also been continuing under the Network for Genomic Surveillance of South Africa, based at Stellenbosch University.

In December, globally there was an increase of 25% (14.5m) in new cases and 12% (46.6k) in deaths reported as compared to November 2022. Japan, South Korea, USA, China and Brazil represented 70% of these new cases in the last of December. There were more than 3 million new cases and at least 10 000 deaths, this was 22% down in new cases and 18% down in deaths as compared to the previous week i.e. week 3 of December and week 51 of the year.

In the last week of Dec new cases declined in all the mentioned countries except in China. In this week 52 of 2022, the China cases increased by 45% and deaths rose by 48%. These has been several media reports of overburdened hospitals and crematoriums in China during December 2022 and early days of January 2023.

This is the situation which has caused a lot of panic in various parts of the world including amongst some South Africans. As a results of these developments a number of countries imposed special requirements for

On the 7th January, the Genomic Surveillance Unit at Stellenbosch University, a member of the Network for Genomics Surveillance in South Africa (NGS-SA) reported the detection of XBB.1.5 sub-variant of Omicron

