

SA rolls out mobile Covid-19 testing units

Health Minister Zweli Mkhize has launched 67 mobile sampling and testing units, which will be deployed nationwide to scale up the country's capacity to test citizens for Covid-19.

The National Health Laboratory Services (NHLS) added 60 new units to its fleet of seven to ramp up its testing capacity. These will be deployed to smaller villages and conduct testing on residents who do not have access to the facilities in the urban centres.

“ [@bandilemasuku](#) inspecting specialized equipment pic.twitter.com/xvCbdfahZX— Dr Zweli Mkhize
([@DrZweliMkhize](#)) [April 1, 2020](#) ”

The minister was briefed on the specialised equipment which will be on board the units, which include computers which will relay information in real time to the NHLS.

Mkhize said that initially the units will test for Covid-19 using the traditional PCR laboratory methods but that he was hopeful that the country would soon procure rapid testing kits which would enable more people to be screened and tested in a shorter period of time.

Disposal gowns, masks and gloves as well as face shields will be utilised by the medical professionals who will accompany the thousands of field testers government aims to deploy.

According to the minister, the mobile units will increase government's testing capacity, which is currently at 5,000 tests in 24 hours in 10 laboratories countrywide, to 80,000 tests in 24 hours.