

Let's protect clinics in the Eastern Cape

HEALTH BUDGET 2023/24

As the Eastern Cape province prepares to finalise the 2023/24 health budget, initial indications are that it will decline over the medium term. National Treasury attributes this to slow economic growth and a decline in tax revenues. While we agree that we should adjust our spending to respect our purses, we suggest that a special effort is made to **protect clinic budgets** – especially in the following categories:

- + Reliable supply of chronic and other **medication**
- + **Training** of new nurses and supervisors
- + **Retention** of current staff and filling of clinic vacancies
- + Technical and management **skills development** for clinic staff
- + **Maintenance and repair** of clinic buildings

An estimated 90% of Eastern Cape residents rely on the public healthcare system for treatment, prevention, and care. This need is expected to grow as COVID-19 undermines decades of progress made in the fight against HIV and TB. Asivikelane Health shows that **54% of residents go to their local clinic more than once per month**. They walk long distances and then wait in lengthy queues for treatment and medication. The growing demand for care puts pressure on nurses, who make up most of the workforce. These factors need serious consideration in the budget so that public clinics are protected and equipped to serve.



RESIDENTS MAINLY VISIT CLINICS FOR:

CHRONIC MEDICATION
40%

TREATMENT – VARIOUS
24%

OTHER MEDICATION
11%

CHILD VACCINATIONS
10%



73% OF RESIDENTS WALK TO THEIR CLINIC



50% TAKE LONGER THAN 30 MINUTES TO GET THERE