Let’s fix clinic appointment systems

Of the 45 clinics covered by Asivikelane Health, 39 have appointment systems in place. At first glance, this seems to be good news. But digging a bit deeper, we found that many of these systems do not work. 50% of clinics only give patients an appointment date with no specific time slot. Clinic managers say they lack the dedicated staff to manage appointments, and many rely on rudimentary paper-based systems. This causes delays, leads to longer queues, and fosters uncertainty and frustration among those waiting in line. 15% of residents cited staff shortages and long waiting times as factors that have deterred them from seeking care at clinics in the last three months.

Fixing appointment systems will improve the clinic experience for everyone. Filling capacity gaps at clinics is key to unlocking change.

The Eastern Cape Health Department can support clinics by:

+ Giving clinics dedicated staff to manage appointments.
+ Providing clear information to patients on how the appointment system works.
+ Training staff on how to manage patient flow.
+ Investing in technology to speed up service delivery.

GOOD NEWS:

76% of residents say clinic services have improved since the last round of Asivikelane Health! Results by district:

BUFFALO CITY METRO 78%
NELSON MANDELA BAY 68%
OR TAMBO 80%

HOTSPOTS:

8 clinics have no appointment system at all:

BUFFALO CITY METRO
Berlin, Greenfields, Newlands, Openshaw, Petros Jobane, Zikhova

NELSON MANDELA BAY
New Brighton

OR TAMBO
Philane

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