

# **REPUBLIC OF KENYA**



## **BOMET COUNTY ASSEMBLY**

### **ASSEMBLY DEBATES**

#### **(OFFICIAL REPORT)**

#### **DAILY HANSARD**

**Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup>, November, 2021**

#### **PLENARY**

#### **BOMET COUNTY ASSEMBLY**

## OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

**Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2021**

*The Assembly met at the Chamber,*

*Main Assembly Buildings at 2:30 p. m.*

*[Hon. Speaker (Hon. N. Mutai) in the Chair]*

### PRAYER

### MOTION

The right to highest attainable standards of health, which includes the right to health care services.

**Hon. Speaker:** (Hon. N. Mutai): Hon. Kirui.

**Hon. L. Kirui:** Hon. Speaker, Sir, allow me to move the Motion that aware that article 43 of the Constitution provides for among other matters; the right to highest attainable standards of health which include the right to health care services. Further aware that lifestyle diseases such as cancer, diabetes, hypertension among other diseases have been on the rise in Bomet County due to lack of proper preventive strategies.

Noting that primary prevention and screening for chronic diseases are considered the best strategy to curtail the prices. Cognizant that big a percentage of residents of Bomet County are economically disadvantaged thus may not afford screening services offered at a free. Concerned that continuous absence of preventive strategies is likely to transfer economic burden of treatment and management of chronic diseases to an already financially challenged population.

Now therefore this Assembly resolves that the County Government through the department of health services develop a comprehensive annual program for conducting comprehensive and exhaustive screening and other primary prevention services for cancer, diabetes, hypertension and other chronic diseases in all wards on rotational basis.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, this is a Motion that I decided to bring to this House because Bomet has been among the counties with the highest rate of non-communicable diseases such as cancer. From a report that was recently Tabled, Bomet and Kericho Counties were ranked among the top counties which have reported the highest number of cancer patients and cancer fatalities.

In terms of economy, Bomet was ranked number 46 out of 47 counties. This means that we are the second poorest county in Kenya. This was the second time such a report was released. I remember in 2016, a report was released that put us as the second poorest county in Kenya.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, I have tried to analyze the contributing factors to the poverty in our County. Hon. Speaker, Sir, the catastrophic expenditure in our County is on a high rate. This means that 80 per cent of the resources that we get in form of income are channeled to gather hospital bills and most of the diseases that drain the pockets of our people are non-communicable diseases.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, prevention is better than cure. In order to reduce the catastrophic expenditure, we need to focus much on preventive measures. One of the preventive measures which has undergone a test and has indicated that it has 80 per cent success is early diagnosis. To attain this, we need health screening. Health screening is an effective way to detect a specific disease.

In health screening, everyone will be allowed to be screened. This is the only better way to know an upcoming condition or disease. Detecting a condition early translates to getting the right treatment at the right time. Currently, we test when signs and symptoms have come up. At that time most diseases are in their late stages where treatment cannot help. In medical terms, it is called 'prognoses'.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, when screening is done early, there will be many benefits. There will be better treatment management and reduce the chances of complication. In most cases, people die because of complications caused by the disease but not the disease itself.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, for the interest of our county, when we diagnose early we save a lot of

money. The expenditure of prevention is less than the expenditure of treatment. In the first Assembly, we hired ambulances with a lot of money. Hired ambulances were not for prevention. So, Hon. Speaker, Sir, prevention is the best strategy.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, some of the tests that can be done through screening including cholesterol tests, blood pressure tests, mammogram, osteoporosis, pap smear test, diabetic tests, STDs/STIs test, prostate cancer and colorectal cancer tests. This can easily be prevented if we do early screening.

As I conclude, Hon. Speaker, Sir, the World Health Organization (WHO) has reported that out of 4 deaths, one death is caused by cancer or related non communicable diseases. In 2015, 55 percent cases were because of communicable diseases. We need to give priorities blood screening. The County Government should develop annual programmes so that every ward will have specific days to do screening. We will mobilize our doctors so that we would not incur cost. We have many specialists in Bomet for instance in Longisa Hospital. We were assigned Cuban doctor in Bomet but we have not seen them yet they are paid a lot of money. Through this motion we will help the executive concerning health issues. Honourable Members lets support this Motion. I request Hon Maritim from Ndanai/Abosi ward to second this Motion.

**Hon. Speaker:** (Hon. N. Mutai): Hon. Maritim.

**Hon. D. Maritim:** Hon. Speaker, I wish to Second the Motion that in article 33 of our Constitution dictates the Right to health care. Screening of chronic diseases is important to our people. The County will be able to engage specialists I different lifestyle diseases. This will help reduce budget for Health department. We need to engage nutritionists to help guided on what we eat.

*The question of the Motion proposed*

**Hon. Speaker:** (Hon. N. Mutai): Hon. Ngeny.

**Hon. L. Ngeny:** Hon Speaker I was ready to support the Motion because it is essential in our lives. Late diagnosis of diabetes and hypertension has led to loss of lives and this are diseases that can be managed. This Motion will help people know if they have the disease in time. Some hospitals have started implementing compulsory Diabetes and Hypertension checkups before being served.

Honourable Members lets pass and support this Motion. The County Government can make diabetes and hypertension checks mandatory to help save lives.

**Hon. Speaker:** (Hon. N. Mutai): Hon. Aaron.

**Hon. H. Kirui:** Hon. Speaker, I rise to support this Motion. Our residents have challenges of the lifestyle diseases. People have spent a lot of money in treating hypertension, diabetes and cancer patients. Most Members here are called for fundraising to offset huge hospital bills. Early diagnosis will help prevent such diseases. Exhaustive screening be done to people in our County to help reduce the cost of treating the diseases. Cancer at stage one and two can be treated.

Hon. Speaker when at an advanced stage, stage four this disease is no longer treatable. We are all victims of cancer in one way or another, I wish that the Executive take this seriously and implement it immediately. The committee on health which I am a member and the motion mover is the chair will ensure that it will be implemented so that we can save finances in our County. Our people are economically challenged and they put healthcare at a later priority.

**Hon. Speaker:** (Hon. N. Mutai): Hon. Cecilia.

**Hon. C. Mutai:** Hon. Speaker I want to congratulate Hon. Leonard Kirui for coming up with this important motion. I want to concur that indeed the executive through the department of health should come up with a programme to conduct annual screening of these lifestyle diseases. We believe that prevention is better than cure and it is possible for our county to conduct this programme.

The most affected are women and those from vulnerable groups. I support this motion because it will enable those who are economically challenged to undergo such screening. Coming up with this programme we will be able to mobilize our people and create awareness for them to attend this screening. I believe that this motion can later translate into a policy; we need to be serious and push the executive to come up with such programmes because being healthy is important for each person. If we encourage our people to undergo screening we will be able to detect these diseases early enough and also reduce the cost of treatment and management of the diseases considering the fundraising events in aid of health bills we have been attending of which most of those affected are in the last stage.

It is high time that this Assembly compels the executive hasten the cancer care centre which we anticipated to have within five years. Apart from these screening programmes we also need to come up facilities. Hon. Speaker I support the motion, thank you.

**Hon. Speaker:** (Hon. N. Mutai): Hon. Langat.

**Hon. A. Langat:** Hon. Speaker I stand to support the motion and appreciate the motion mover. It is fifty-eight years since independence and the founding fathers had three pillars for the country and one of them was good healthcare. The aspect of prevention is the easiest way to utilize resources and to safeguard the people. As we debate this motion it is important we remind the executive to take this serious and implement. Cancer is eating away our lives and killing dreams, it is high time that as a leadership of this county we should be able to pronounce and capitalize all our resources to ensure we engage in productive activities towards preventing chronic diseases.

Nearly sixty per cent of the bed occupants in our facilities are being treated for diseases like cancer, H.I.V & A.I.D.S, diabetes, cardiac arrest and blood pressure. This is an opportunity for us to demonstrate leadership. The department of health is allocated a big part of our budget that would have been utilized elsewhere. By enforcing these preventive measures, it will help us to allocate resource elsewhere. I remember on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2009 the retired <sup>[11 SEP]</sup>President Mwai Kibaki declared H.I.V & A.I.D.S as a national disaster, there were several interventions and by three years the prevalence rate reduced to manageable percentage. I challenge the chairperson of health to ensure implementation of this motion. I challenge every department to take a lead in preventive measures to be able to combat these chronic diseases. Mr. Speaker I do support, thank you.

**Hon. Speaker:** (Hon. N. Mutai): Hon. Deputy Speaker.

**Hon. W. Kiprotich:** Hon. Speaker I congratulate the motion mover so that the people can be taken care of. Indeed, as mentioned, prevention is better than cure and as in Kiswahili '*Asifuye mvua imemnyea*'. All members of this County Assembly have reference to a relative or a close person affected by this disease. In as much as I support this motion I would like to ask what lifestyle disease is.

Hon. Kirui quoted article 43 of the constitution and he said the highest attainable standard health which includes the right to healthcare service and aware that lifestyle disease such as

cancer and diabetes, my question is why these diseases are rated as lifestyle diseases. My dispute is about the categorization for instance a one-year-old who tested positive for diabetes while the parents tested negative, my question is which type of lifestyle this child has undergone such that the child is testing positive, we need the medics; to do more research to identify the lifestyle diseases. What Hon. Kirui is proposing is about early screening, early diagnosis of chronic diseases. There are advantages and disadvantages of these screening processes for instance Pap smear which I believe is not an easy thing to conduct. The process is so much into the life of an individual. These are women whose secrecy to their bodies is highly guarded. The pap smear process causes a lot bleeding at times. At times, the disease may not have manifested in the first testing.

So, these are some of the disadvantages that occurs during the diagnosis. Cancer, if diagnosed at the first stage, can be treated or cured. Therefore, early detection is good. There is no need to have leaders and their people are dying every day. We are supposed to be educated on the lifestyles that can bring a lot of issues to us.

Hon. Speaker, the Department of Health should be proactive because a healthy county is a wealthy nation. The curative processes are expensive and even the rich no longer afford. In my Ward, there is patient who was admitted to the ICU for 21 days battling two diseases namely; diabetes and hypertension. Out of the 21 days, the individual is expected to pay Kshs. 2. 1Million. Therefore, prevention is better than cure.

I support.

**Hon. Speaker:** (Hon. N. Mutai): Hon. Leonard.

**Hon. L. Kirui:** Hon. Speaker, I appreciate the debate the Members have contributed. There is a question that was asked by Hon. W. Kiprotich. This was on the lifestyle diseases. There are lifestyle diseases caused by water and there are those that are inherited. However, inherited lifestyle diseases may manifest in different generations.

However, 90 per cent of the lifestyle diseases are caused by an individual's way of life and the remainder is through inheritance. The Honourable Member said there is no need to have leaders when the residents are dying. We should therefore safeguard the health of our people. If early screening is carried out, more advantages shall be realized. Life is important than the process of the procedure.

Hon. Speaker, cancer is treatable at stage one. However, beyond that, palliative care is offered. In this House, we make legislations and pass motions and therefore, we should be taken serious. I am here to debate albeit serious business in my Ward.

Hon. C. Mutai said this Motion can generate policies and eventually Bills. That is the direction that we need to head. A research that was carried by WHO indicated that out of four deaths, one is caused by non-communicable diseases which include cancer. Hon. A. Langat from Singorwet Ward said that in Longisa Hospital, 50 per cent of the patients are suffering from non-communicable diseases. In a research done in 2015, it was shown that 50 per cent of the hospital admissions are patients with non-communicable diseases. This means Hon. A. Langat is correct in his own analysis. This idea requires a multi-disciplinary approach to combat it. I agree with what the Members have said.

Hon. Speaker, prevention is cheaper than cure. Otherwise, I thank the Members and I urge them to approve the motion.

*(Question of the Motion put and agreed to)*

*(Applause)*

**Hon. A. Langat:** Hon. Speaker, on a point of order. The House is getting hot and I do not know whether it is the condition of the room. The occupation safety certificate must be issued before allowing the use of any facility. Therefore, I am seeking your indulgence and I recommend that the same be looked at administratively.

**Hon. Speaker:** (Hon. N. Mutai): Hon. Members, the issue is being looked at.

*(Applause)*

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Hon. Speaker:** (Hon. N. Mutai): Hon. Members, there being no other business, this Assembly stands adjourned to tomorrow the 17<sup>th</sup> February, 2021 at 9. 00 a.m.

*The Assembly rose at 3:45 p.m*