

Someone is listening to complaints about clinics

By NJABULO NGCOBO

HOW many times have you been standing in the queue at the clinic only to have the doctor or nurse take a break when it's your turn?

Well, people in KZN, Free State and Northern Cape can now complain about the poor treatment they get from clinics, thanks to Soul City Institute.

Using a model that's done wonders in India, Soul City is getting people to monitor the health services in a community-based monitoring programme.

With the monitoring programme, people who are victims of public services can complain about their poor service and hold services providers responsible.

People who visit clinics are asked to regularly note their experiences on a report card by using smiley faces if they are satisfied with the service and sad faces if they are not. Questions asked by the monitoring teams include:

- ★ How clean were the clinic's toilets?
- ★ How friendly and helpful were the staff?
- ★ Did visitors get their medicine?
- ★ How safe did they feel in the clinic?
- ★ How long did they had to wait to be seen?
- ★ Did they encounter any other problems?

The information collected is shared with clinic management who then must improve the quality of health services for all.

Soul City senior research manager, Bongiwe Ndondo, said the the aim is to show communities that regular feedback can make a difference in the quality of services government delivers.

Clinics being monitored are:

- Dr Torres, Betty Gaetsewe and Masakhane in Northern Cape.
- Turton in Mthwalume, Gamalakhe and Ezingolweni in Thembalesizwe in KwaZulu-Natal.
- Kganya, Refengkhotso and Pax in Free State.