



KZN has the highest HIV infection rate in the country and one of the leading causes of this scourge is that many men in the province allegedly still don't use condoms.

To overcome this, the KZN government launched a condom manufacturing plant on Tuesday.

The launch of the factory coincided with the 21st International Aids Conference currently taking place at the ICC in Durban.

The new factory, which is the first in the province and only the second in the country, will be situated at the Dube Trade Port's special economic zone, right next to the King Shaka International Airport.

The province aims to distribute at least 212 million free condoms each financial year. When it is fully functional, the factory will produce no fewer than 700 000 condoms per day, some of which will be exported to other African countries.

KZN MEC for health Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo said: "We are very pleased that the plan to build a condom manufacturing plant in KZN has come to fruition.

"The presence of this plant will go a long way to assist our programmes and prevent illnesses from spreading."

He said he would ask condom manufacturers to consider lowering the price of female condoms, which are more expensive than men's condoms. Dhlomo said limited access to female condoms led to challenges as men were generally still stubborn, and many still had the upper hand in making decisions that may affect the sexual health of their partners negatively.

HBM-SA Health Protection Services has invested R150 million in the project.