



MINISTRY OF HEALTH

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE OUTBREAK OF
ANTHRAX IN CHAMA**

Presented to the National Assembly

by

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Hon. Minister of Health

5th October 2016

Pre-amble

Mr. Speaker, thank you for granting me this opportunity to present a Ministerial Statement on the outbreak of Anthrax in Chama District of Muchinga Province and to indicate the measures that Government has taken to stop the spread of the disease.

Background

Mr. Speaker, I wish to inform the House that there is an on-going outbreak of Anthrax in Chama District of Muchinga Province. The first case was reported on the 22nd of September 2016, and there are currently twenty-two (22) cases and no associated human deaths.

Mr. Speaker, Anthrax is a disease that affects animals and can be transmitted to humans. It is caused by a bacterium, called ***Bacillus Anthracis***, which can last for extremely long periods in nature. When animals or humans come into contact with this bacteria, they can become infected. There are three (3) forms of Anthrax in humans:

1. **Cutaneous or the “Skin” form of Anthrax.** This appears as sores on the skin in the parts of the body that have come into contact with the Anthrax Bacteria;
2. **Inhalation or Pulmonary Anthrax.** In this form, the person breathes in the Anthrax Bacteria and the lungs get affected. The person develops a cough and has difficulty breathing and may die if not treated in time;
3. **Gastro-intestinal Anthrax.** In this form, the Anthrax Bacteria are swallowed and the patient develops bloody diarrhea. The person could possibly die from this form if not treated in time.

Mr. Speaker, since the first case was reported investigations have been carried out by my Ministry working in conjunction with other Government Departments and Agencies and it has been established