



Western Cape
Government

Health

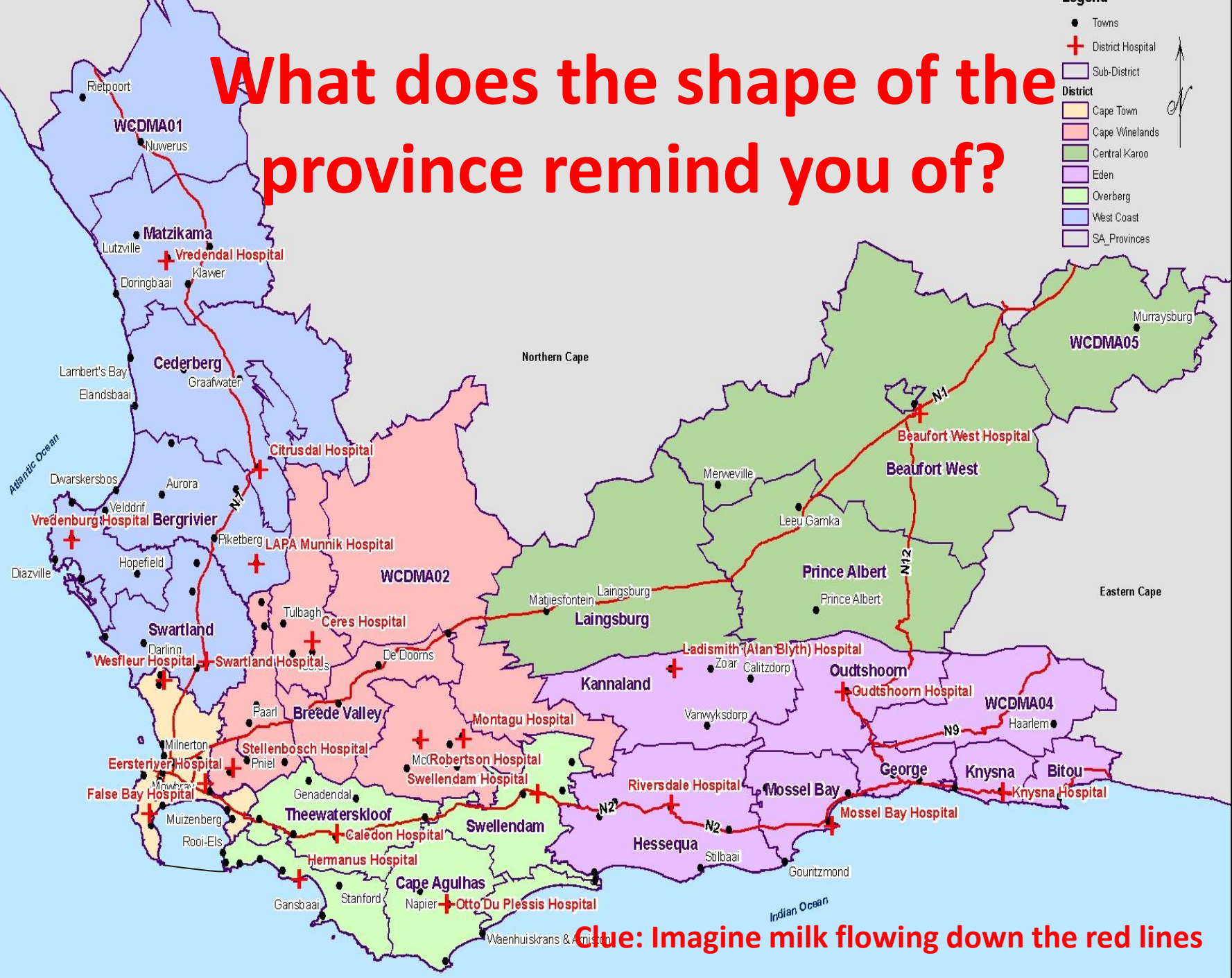
Breast milk and child wellness

Prof Tony Westwood

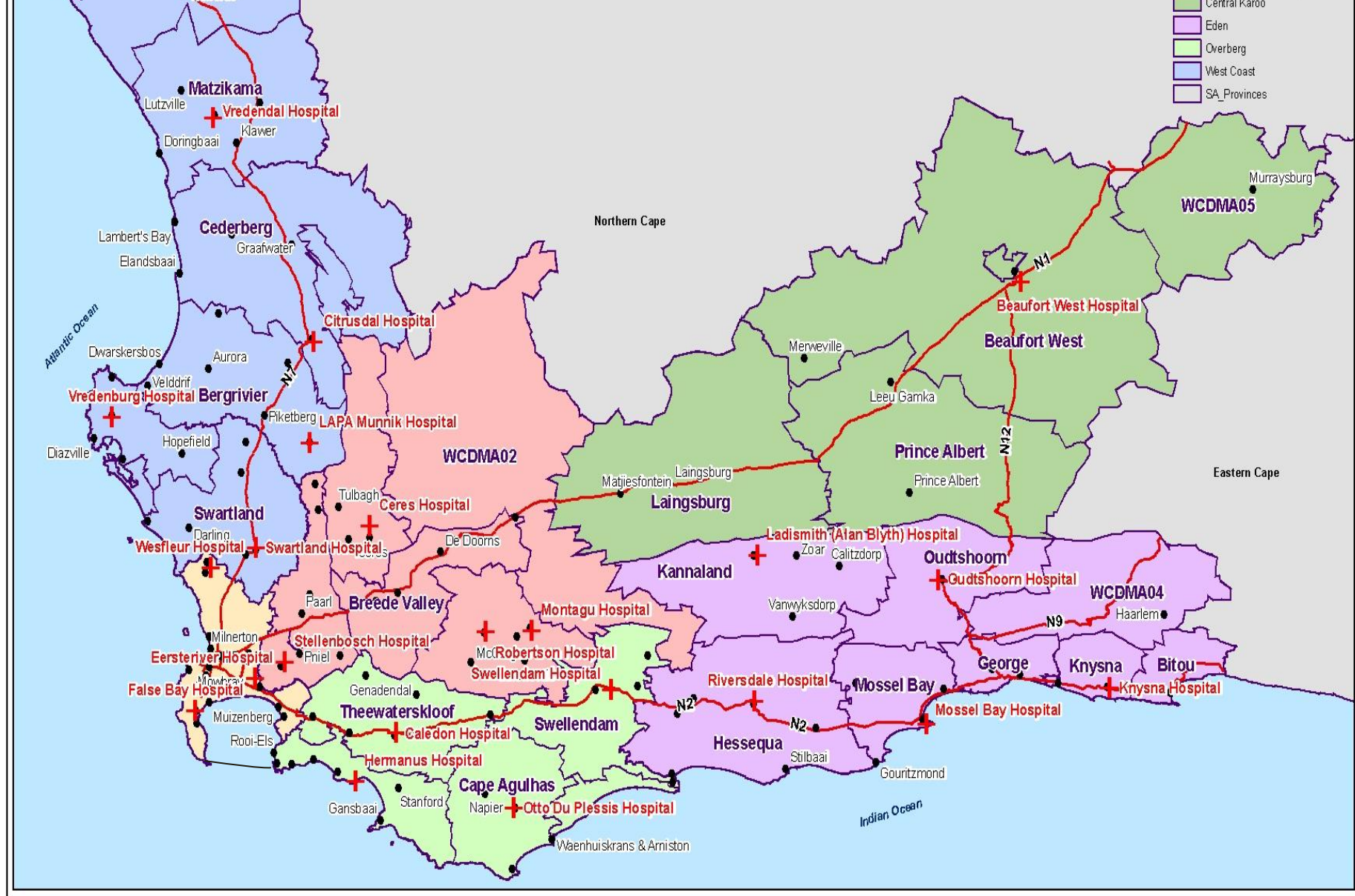
Chairman: Provincial Clinical
Governance Committee – Child Health

What does the shape of the province remind you of?

- Legend**
- Towns
 - + District Hospital
 - Sub-District
 - District
 - Cape Town
 - Cape Winelands
 - Central Karoo
 - Eden
 - Overberg
 - West Coast
 - SA_Provinces



Glue: Imagine milk flowing down the red lines



PGWC: The B(r)e(a)st provincial government in the world?

We cannot be ‘the best provincial government in the world’ if we are not committed to making **breast milk** the nutritional foundation of the health of our population

But it is not only about
government.....

“The Child is the Father of the Man” – or the Woman

i.e. how we look after children’s wellness determines what sort of adults they will be.

N.B.: children’s wellness is for children primarily (No ‘Brave New Province’ thinking allowed.....)



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Breast milk and child **and adult** wellness in the Western Cape

Prof Tony Westwood

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Why breast milk? Why breast feeding?

- ✓ Gets the most balanced bodily growth *
- ✓ Gets the best protection against common childhood infections
- ✓ Gets the best mother/child relationship (the foundation of mental health) * • • •
- ✓ Does not put money where the mouth is!
- ✓ Is good for the mother's health and wellbeing (does she know this?) * • • •
- ✓ Has life-long health benefits for the child (and therefore for society) * • • •

Less obesity and heart disease

e.g. less alcohol abuse

Fewer cancers, less obesity

Fewer allergies, less diabetes etc.

Why breast milk? Why breast feeding?

Child and adult wellness are built on breast milk and breast feeding.

What are the consequences of NOT building a solid foundation?

VERY EXPENSIVE

Why breast milk at this Summit?

- We have very poor exclusive breast feeding rates
- Improving breast feeding rates is associated with one of the best profiles for positive change in human health of any intervention
- This major benefit to children and society can be achieved at little cost
- There are well studied ways of improving breast feeding rates that are multi-interventional i.e. do lots of things at the same time to get the best results
- Effective intervention therefore involves us all: communities & civil society, elected representatives, most government departments, business, media

Why does breast milk involve us all?

- Promotion, protection and support require **communities, media** and **businesses** to be agents for change
- Sufficient change requires laws, regulations and policies to protect it:
 - **Cabinet, Parliament, Labour, Trade and Industry, Education, Health.....**
- We need to understand dynamics with respect to breast feeding within households better – **Higher Education and Research groups**

Some examples

- Gender equity
- Maternity leave
- Marketing of formula milks
- Educating children about infant feeding
- “Free” formula and HIV
- Enabling breast feeding in public
- Pregnant female farm labourers
- Media images and messages

How are we to do this?

- We deliberate today
- We take Breast Milk Restoration as a lead theme to the afternoon session – and show how breast milk can
 - Reduce violence
 - Reduce non-communicable diseases
 - Prevent TB and HIV
 - Improve the health of women

Please join

The Breast milk Restoration Alliance

a.k.a.

The B.R.A.

Motto: "We support the Breast"



THE LAND OF (BREAST) MILK

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