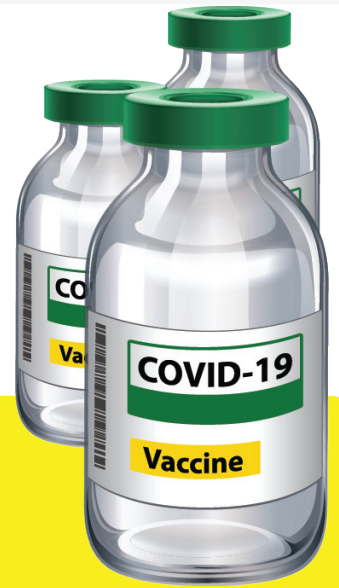




## FIGHT TO LIVE, CHOOSE VACCINATION AND HELP US BEAT COVID-19



Fellow people of KwaZulu-Natal, the time has come for all of us to join hands and fight the COVID-19 pandemic, which is once again threatening to claim lives on a massive scale, while causing untold damage to our economy.

### REGISTRATION NOW OPEN FOR PEOPLE OVER 50

As from the 1st of July 2021, people who are aged 50 years and older are now eligible to register on the Electronic Vaccination Data System (EVDS). You are therefore requested to seize the opportunity because your turn has finally come.

### DELTA VARIANT

We are now battling the new Delta variant, which has been detected in six Districts in our province. This variant was first located in India and has now been detected in 96 countries, including South Africa. It is fast becoming dominant a SARS-CoV-variant in our country, as well as globally.

### NON PHARMACEUTICAL MEASURES CAN SAVE US

Adherence to the New Normal is highly encouraged. Fellow citizens are therefore still urged to:

- Wear our masks, covering both the nose and mouth at all times – including at home, where one may be around elderly people and/or those with co-morbidities;
- Avoid crowded spaces and large gatherings;
- Wash our hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer regularly; and
- Maintain social distancing of at least 2m between ourselves and other people.

### IF YOU'VE BEEN EXPOSED YOU MUST PROTECT OTHERS

People who may have come in contact with infected persons need to get tested, and then adhere to quarantine for at least 10 days in order to limit the transmission of the virus. Our tracing teams are also still on the ground giving support through tracing contacts of index cases.

### DON'T DIE AT HOME; COME TO US

Those who have the COVID – 19 symptoms (such as fever, dry cough, loss of smell or taste, diarrhoea and tiredness, among others) are urged to present themselves at healthcare facilities so that they can get tested, and then isolated accordingly. The Department has created enough

bed capacity for this. We are always concerned when people pass away at home due to COVID-19.

If you have tested positive for COVID-19, it is better to be admitted to a healthcare facility and receive treatment from healthcare professionals than to be at home-in case complications set in.

### COVID-19 VACCINES ARE SAFE

We want to assure the people of this province that the COVID-19 vaccines that are in use in South Africa have undergone rigorous scientific testing, and are safe for use.






In fact, there is data that proves that both Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson vaccines are effective against the Delta virus as well other variants that cause severe illness.

We therefore call on all those who are eligible to register and get vaccinated, so that we can protect one another, and outlive the COVID-19 pandemic.

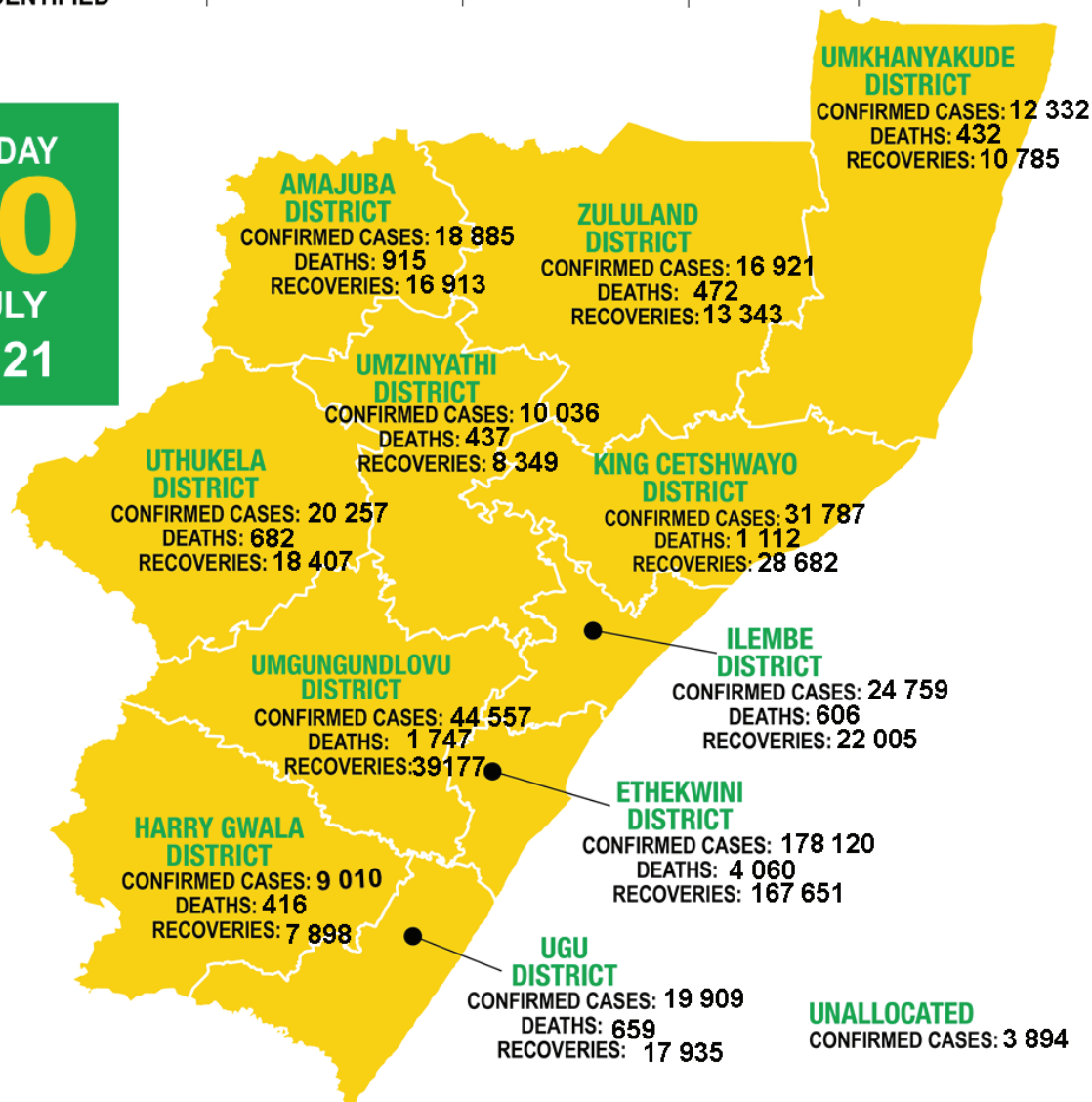
It is in our hands.

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# COVID-19 STATISTICS IN KZN

				
<b>391 331</b>	<b>23 928</b>	<b>355 001</b>	<b>11538</b>	<b>1 900</b>
POSITIVE CASES IDENTIFIED	ACTIVE CASES	RECOVERIES	DEATHS	NEW CASES

FRIDAY  
**30**  
JULY  
2021



Learn more to Be READY for #COVID19:  
[www.sacoronavirus.co.za](http://www.sacoronavirus.co.za)

NICD Hotline: 0800 029 999  
WhatsApp 'Hi' to 0600 123 456



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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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# KWAZULU-NATAL EDUCATORS ANECDOTES ON THE COVID-19 VACCINE

Despite the unprecedented challenges, doubts, and fears, many KwaZulu-Natal school educators and other personnel were pleased to be receiving their Covid-19 vaccination, which began on the 23rd of June, 2021 across the country.

Hundreds of department employees from the uMgungundlovu District showed up at the East Boom CHC vaccination site on Tuesday 6 July, 2021 to receive the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. The rollout vaccination for KZN educators is underway, and many have expressed their delight, encouraging others who have not yet vaccinated to come and register so they can vaccinate and be protected.

Here are some first-hand accounts from those who have taken the job:

## MY NAME IS CASHEL HARTLAND (41)

She works as an administration clerk at Maritzburg College

### What exactly motivated you to get vaccinated today?

I made the decision to get vaccinated today because it is extremely important; I have two elderly parents at home and a son who has comorbidity. If I were to contract Covid-19, there's a risk he'd contract it as well. And if he had gotten COVID-19, he would have ended up in the hospital, and visits have been halted due to the strict lockdown regulations.

This made it hard for relatives to check on their loved ones admitted to public hospitals, which is something most people don't understand, so getting vaccinated is critical right now.

### Tell us how you feel now that you've been vaccinated.

I am very happy that now I have vaccinated, it was not even sore, the process was simple and painless, my arm was sore for about 10 minutes and it was done. These symptoms are considered normal, and a sign that the COVID-19 vaccine is working to stimulate your immune system and to protect you. And I am very confident that it is going to build my immune system, I think I did the best thing I can do for myself, my family, friends and colleagues.

### How many members of your family have already received the vaccine?

I am the third person to get vaccinated in my family; both my parents are over 60 they have vaccinated. My sister will vaccinate on the next run, and when the rollout for the children becomes available, I will undoubtedly vaccinate my son.

### What is your advice for people that are still skeptical to get a vaccine?

I recently received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine and would like to encourage everyone to ignore fake news and take advantage of the opportunity if they have. People should register, because it is important for South Africa to unite as one so that we can stop wearing masks and living in fear and resume our normal lives; if we can resume our normal lives, the economy will improve, people will earn money again, and people will find jobs. It's a difficult world out there, so I strongly advise everyone in South Africa to get vaccinated.



continued on page 04 >>>

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**MY NAME IS FREEMAN MADONDO (36)**

He works under maintenance at Hayfields Primary School

**What prompted you to come in today to get vaccinated?**

The reason I decided to come and get vaccinated today is that; I work with people, and I believe that if I vaccinate, I will be less likely to spread the disease. If I get infected, I will not spread the disease, but more importantly, I will protect not only myself but also my family, friends and colleagues, as we all know, this is a very difficult disease.

**How do you feel about getting your first jab today?**

Well, I'm both nervous and excited; masks are uncomfortable, and breathing one air is difficult; hopefully, maybe once we achieve herd immunity, we'll be able to remove our masks permanently, and life will return to normal. The removal of our masks is one of the many reasons to get vaccinated.

**What advice would you provide to people who are still hesitant to be vaccinated?**

I will advise people to get vaccinated since we don't know what the future holds, maybe going forward if you are not vaccinated you won't be permitted to enter shops or lose your job even. Vaccine has proven to be the only solution for life to return to normalcy. You also can talk to your doctor if you have questions about the vaccines and if there is any reason you should not get vaccinated.

**MY NAME IS YAKSHA SARAWAN (45)**

She works as a finance clerk at Maritzburg College

**What prompted you to come in today to get vaccinated?**

I am a chronic patient with diabetes as my primary ailment. My concern was not getting vaccinated as soon as possible, because I was afraid of contracting Covid-19; in the last few months, I have lost close friends and family members who were all healthy. As a result, getting vaccinated in whatever manner is vital at this stage in order to obtain some protection against this unknown pandemic.

**Tell us, were you nervous about COVID-19 Vaccination?**

No! I was extremely excited, because I thought I'd have wait longer, you know being 45, the age gap 50 to 59 has opened and I thought I'd have to wait at least another 2 months before I would have to get my vaccine. But I am very blessed working for Department of Education; the initiative to join forces with Department of Health is noteworthy. I was lucky to be able to come through today with my colleagues, especially with the Johnson and Johnson it's 1 jab not 2. Irrespective whether it's 1 or 2, it's good protection.

**Did you experience any side effects after obtaining the vaccine?**

Uhm not really, my arm was feeling sore initially, but after I went out in the sun and the warmth, I actually feel fine. I'm actually hungry (chuckling). I don't think it's the vaccine; we arrived pretty early today, so it must be the wait; I'm used to napping. Overall, I'm fine and I feel normal.

**What is your advice to people who are still hesitant to get the vaccine?**

People should stop listening to Dr Google, although it is important to stay informed, don't get sucked into consuming too much news or social media. There's so much misinformation out there, so it's important you get the accurate information. There is a lot of misinformation about COVID-19 and the vaccines out there.



People should listen to health professionals and government officials and go get vaccinated. Covid-19 is a very young disease, there are vaccines that were out even before, like; smallpox, measles, and we all pass through that. It's simple, take the vaccine and stay protected.

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# WE NEED MORE PEOPLE AGED OVER 60 TO GET VACCINATED:

- **TURNOUT IN TOWNSHIPS AND VILLAGES IS LOW AND NEEDS TO INCREASE;**

**We are pleased with the rate of vaccinations for people aged 60 and above.**

We are also happy with the progress that is being made since we started vaccinating educators and support staff from the Education sector this month.

However, we are of the firm view that many more senior citizens aged 60 and above need to come forward and get vaccinated. We have reason to believe that the many myths and false beliefs that have been made about the safety of the COVID-19 vaccines have created a sense of hesitancy and doubt among many people.

According to anecdotal evidence, this seems particularly true among African people in townships and villages. We want to reassure all the “doubting Thomases” that all COVID-19 vaccines that are authorised for use in South Africa have undergone rigorous scientific tests, and are therefore safe to use. They pose no threat.

- **RISE IN NEW INFECTIONS IS WORRYING, AND DEMANDS URGENT INTERVENTION FROM YOU AND ME**

Coupled with non-pharmaceutical interventions such as the wearing of masks, regular hand washing or sanitization and social distancing, vaccines are the only defence that we can give our bodies against this deadly virus. We call upon oqogo nomkhulu to register for the vaccination, and to young people who are better at using technology to help them in this regard. Those senior citizens who are unable to register themselves are urged to visit vaccination sites. We will register and vaccinate them.

## CONCERN OF RISING NEW INFECTIONS

Meanwhile, the stark reality that we need to acknowledge is that the Province of KwaZulu Natal is now experiencing a significant rise in COVID-19 new infections, along with other provinces that have already hit their peak and declared a resurgence.

This is something we all should be worried about. Given the increasing rate of new infections, we simply cannot allow the virus to take its toll and claim many lives as it did during the previous two waves.

You, Me and all of Us together have a responsibility to prevent the onset of the 3rd wave. In order for us to achieve this, we all need to practice

continued on page 06 >>>

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responsible social behavior at all times, in order to protect ourselves and others. We need to embrace the New Normal, and religiously practice the COVID-19 protocols.

### WE MUST ENSURE THAT:

- We avoid large gatherings;
- We wear our masks at all times;
- We wash our hands with soap and water or hand

sanitizer regularly; and  
- Maintain social distancing.

We appeal to younger people to protect the elderly and those with co-morbidities by avoiding parties and large crowds; as well as wearing masks even at home.

It is important to note that even after vaccinating, we still have to adhere to these non-pharmaceutical

interventions. Together, we can defeat COVID-19.



MS NOMAGUGU SIMELANE, MEC FOR HEALTH

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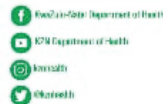
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It is important to note that even after vaccinating, we still have to adhere to these non-pharmaceutical interventions.

**Together, we can defeat COVID - 19**



SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW TO REGISTER FOR VACCINATION



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# MEN'S STRAIGHT TALK WITH DR NHLAKANIPHO GUMEDE

July is Men's month in which we are called upon to zoom in on Men's Health and bring to the fore a myriad of issues which affect men and their wellness.

Men are regarded as the leaders, heads of families, fathers, brothers, husbands, and soldiers. Many people may argue that women are leaders in our society. For me working in a healthy environment, is not far from the truth.

In my experience working in a primary health care environment, I can attest to the fact that men are very economic with their visits to clinics and hospitals. When men come to a health facility usually it is too late for the condition to be treated with success. One may ask why we are worried about men not accessing health; well many diseases may in one way or the other cause the untimely death of men. We can no longer afford to lose a life from preventable diseases and treatable conditions.

It is, therefore, safe to say that with all the attempts made to have fast queues for men in clinics, we still do not have men voluntarily taking care of their health. Some people still believe men do not cry, in other words, if you are a man you have to be strong and if you access healthcare it is a sign of weakness. This is not true, if anything it is a sign of respect for your own life.

## MEN'S HEALTH AWARENESS

It is then important to raise awareness about men's health. Allow me to mention a few conditions that are important for men to look into. But in doing so let me first remind both men and women that it is in our interest to

ensure women's health and men's health. We should be ensuring that by now we know our HIV status and if we are positive, ensure that we take treatment for this. It is unacceptable in our days to have men dying of HIV, a controllable disease. I understand those who may think if they start taking treatment they will be stigmatized but even so, in 2021 stigma should be eradicated and all peoples of this country should be free to take the treatment of their choice to prolong their lives.

Apart from sexually transmitted diseases, there are a few diseases that we as men need to know about, knowing is good but to do something about the knowledge we have is of paramount importance. To list a few important diseases

**Infectious diseases:** HIV and TB

**Violence and Injury:** Social behavior and to a larger extent talks to the use of alcohol and substance abuse

**Lifestyle diseases:** Hypertension, Diabetes, Obesity, Cerebrovascular disease Alcohol and Substance abuse

Prostate cancer, penile cancer, and testicular cancer not forgetting colon cancer

The best way we know to prevent diseases is to use the principles of primary health care, we need to know first, and this will require the health workers to provide information in various ways to raise this awareness. Therefore I hope with this session you will be able to know issues that affect men in particular even though they are not limited to men.

## SCREENING

I would like to advise men to get used to visiting the clinics or their GP's even when they are not sick. The screening of conditions that can affect men is very important. The expectation would be to be screened for chronic diseases like hypertension and diabetes to some extent the screening of cholesterol, HIV, and TB. Men need to be proactive in this approach. The value of annual health assessments cannot be over-emphasized. It is advisable for men at the age of 20 to have this screening done. If there is nothing found then you can wait and be checked again every 5 years.

The most important screening that men need to do is the prostate assessment. Prostate cancer is very common in men, even though this cancer is rare in men under the age of 40. These checks need to be done in men at the age of 45 if they do not have any family history of cancer. This could be done by checking the PSA value but also by putting a finger on your bum to touch and feel your prostate. This may

continued on page 08>>>

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seem uncomfortable for men but it is the greatest tool to save your life. My professor in medical school used to tell us as students that if you don't put the finger to examine patients you are messing up. Indeed this is correct as this is the golden tool.

But without diving deep into scary things like cancers, we have a serious problem in our society concerning infertility and erectile dysfunction. Many times women are blamed for not having kids and little investigation is done on men to check their fertility. It is then important that we talk about this and make men aware to make it a norm that they need to check themselves if they have infertility or they are subfertile. This may help restore the dignity of women and also enable men to receive health care early and improve family relations. As much as men are not very happy to talk about this, this topic needs to be spoken about.

Same as erectile dysfunction, men need to step up once they are conscious of their difficulty to maintain an erection. This most of the time is as a result of other medical conditions like diabetes or hypertension and if this can be found early then they can be treated on time. So if you suffer from any form of erectile dysfunction I would urge that you visit your GP and get checked as soon as possible. Whatever problem you may have please do not ignore it, access help. Do not use street products that might complicate your conditions.

## CANCERS

When I was speaking to a urology registrar Dr. Gerald Mataruka a few weeks ago he reminded me that prostate cancer is a number one cancer in men, if we may forget about any other cancer and just remember one, that should be prostate cancer. This emphasizes the need to talk more about this and ensure that men understand what is at stake.

1 in 4 men has a risk of getting prostate cancer.

Every man needs to know about prostate cancer.

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The biggest risk factor for prostate cancer in men above the age of 45

Black males are more at risk of prostate cancer than other race categories

Family history of prostate cancer is a serious risk factor

Diet high in saturated fat, smoking as well can be linked to prostate cancer

Most of these risk factors we cannot change. So it's important to be screened for this illness.

The most common question we get is if men actually can be diagnosed with breast cancer? This is true, men who present with a mass on their breasts are most likely to be diagnosed with breast cancer than females. So it's important to get checked up early. But masses in the breast are often confused with gynecomastia. The latter is often seen in men who abuse alcohol as well.

## MENTAL HEALTH

Before we close this information-sharing session I need to talk about mental health. Every human being can suffer from mental health, depression is real, and this may come from social stresses of life such as financial distress, family relations, and workplace stressors, and so on. I would urge men, in particular, to look for help when they feel like they are unable to cope. This is not a sign of weakness.

The saying that 'men are made of steel' does not mean men are immune to mental health. The worrying factor with mental health issues is that this may lead to suicide. Men are most likely to succeed when they attempt to commit suicide. Suicide is 3 times more common in men, and is very common in South Africa. Therefore we need to be conscious of these issues. Men themselves need to support one another as and when they see that other men are depressed or not coping.

## COVID-19

In the times of COVID, a lot of people have lost jobs others work hours cut and life is difficult for many. So these issues can no longer be ignored. So we need to learn about the signs of depression and be able to report this to someone who may assist. Some symptoms of depression are the same for men and women.

### These include:

Feeling sad, tearful, low, guilty, or empty

Losing enjoyment in pleasurable activities

Appetite or weight changes

Too little or too much sleep

Feeling agitated or tired

Having trouble concentrating

Not everyone with depression will experience all of these symptoms.

I hope that all the information that we shared today will help you to make a sound decision about your health, good luck as you take this right decision. But I can't ignore the pandemic in our country, and the message is to ensure that we adhere to COVID-19 regulations at all times.

That may mean, limiting gatherings, wearing face masks that cover both your mouth and your nose, stay home if you have flu symptoms, and get tested as soon as possible. Wash your hands or sanitize whichever is possible.





## NEW FORENSIC PATHOLOGY SERVICES FLEET WILL IMPROVE RESPONSE TIMES - KZN HEALTH MEC (CONCERN OVER RISING COVID-19 INFECTIONS AS PROVINCE APPROACHES 1500 NEW CASES PER DAY)

KwaZulu-Natal Health MEC Ms Nomagugu Simelane says the recent handing over of 16 brand new vehicles to medico-legal mortuaries across the province will improve response times for the collection of mortal remains, securing the dignity of the deceased and their families.

The latest addition to the province's fleet brings the number of operational Forensic Pathology Services vehicles to 128 in the province. It includes two brand-new disaster trucks that are able to carry up to 12 bodies at a time, and have chillers that can be plugged into an electric socket to expand capacity; while the remaining bakkies can carry a maximum of 4 bodies each. The entire investment is valued at R13m.

Speaking at an official hand-over ceremony, held at the Dumbe Community Health Centre - in keeping with Level 4 regulations.

MEC Simelane said she was pleased to have met and interacted with FPS staff; adding that this was one of many upcoming efforts to improve service delivery and working conditions within this critical sector.

“Our Forensic Pathology Services staff perform work that is of an extremely sensitive nature, on a daily basis... Work which is essential. In addressing issues faced by workers in this sector, we've decided to start by attending to their vehicles, which form part of their tools of trade.

“We know that theirs is an old fleet, where vehicles are sometimes not able to function optimally. This ends up affecting their ability to respond timeously when called up to collect mortal remains. We've therefore started a process of adding to the existing fleet of vehicles. Due to the fact that we do not have enough financial resources, we will be buying more vehicles every financial year.”

The MEC also sounded alarm bells over the rising rate of new COVID – 19 infections in KZN, which is fast-approaching the 1500 mark for the first time in months. MEC Simelane has once again pleaded with the public to help avert the spread of COVID – 19 by adhering to non-pharmaceutical interventions, such as the wearing of masks, regular washing of hands with soap and water or hand sanitiser, and practicing social distancing of at least 2m.

She has also encouraged senior citizens aged 60 and above to register for vaccinations. Those who encounter challenges are advised to present themselves at vaccination sites, where they will get registered and vaccinated.

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# LETS ALL PAY ATTENTION TO PSYCHOSOCIAL DISABILITY



**July marks the commemoration of Psychosocial Disability Awareness Month. The theme for this year according to the South Africa Federation for Mental Health (SAMHF) is “See me, hear me, and include me: The impact of Covid-19 on persons with psychosocial disability.”**

The focus for this month is on raising awareness about how the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting persons with psychological disability and the general population.

The campaign also seeks to highlight the ongoing barriers to mental health services and ways in which support to persons with psychological disability could be improved and more accessible.

According to the Mental Health Coordinating Council (2021) psychological disability refers to disability stemming from mental illness, a condition which is more difficult to see and understand. People with disability often face

stigma and discrimination and experience increasing difficulty in accessing and even maintaining employment, housing, education and social relationships.

The mental health and wellbeing of the whole society has been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and must be considered a priority that needs to be addressed urgently. Psychological distress in populations is widespread with many countries now experiencing the third wave of the virus.

## DISTRESS DUE TO THE IMMEDIATE IMPACTS OF THE VIRUS AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF PHYSICAL ISOLATION. THESE INCLUDE:

- Fear of infection, dying, losing family members,
- Stress related to having the virus,
- Fear of taking the vaccine, and
- Stress related to economic situations as well as
- Frequent misinformation, rumours about the virus and deep uncertainty about the future.

An upsurge in the number and severity of mental health problems is expected. Specific populations are showing high degrees of COVID-19 related psychological distress i.e. frontline health care workers, children and adolescents, the elderly, populations with comorbidities, woman, the homeless and those with psychosocial disability.

The SAFMH, together with community based mental health organizations, are calling on persons with psychosocial disability to share their voices and experiences during this pandemic. There is a call that we need to hear, listen and include the voices of persons with psychosocial disability and that we ensure that they can access mental health services and information during the pandemic. There is also a call that all South African's join hands in the fight not just against COVID-19, but also against the continued neglect of mental health, perpetuated by stigma, prejudice and discrimination. It is important to remember that there is “no health without mental health” and that anyone can develop a mental illness, there is no shame in admitting to having a mental illness and seeking treatment.

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# FINANCIAL LITERACY LESSONS FOR DOH EMPLOYEES



**KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health head office in Natalia has introduced daily virtual financial education sessions on Zoom. The aim is to educate its employees on a vast number of topics on financial savviness.**

This is after an observation that most people are overly indebted and going into debt counselling or administration without understanding pros and cons or are getting ripped off by financial institutions as a result of lack of knowledge.

The initiative is meant to equip staff with necessary tools to maneuver their way into every financial hurdle. The virtual financial literacy education meetings started in mid-May till to end of June 2021 and were purely targeting head office employees.

## TOPICS WHICH WERE DISCUSSED OUT WERE AS FOLLOWS:

- Effective budgeting and saving
- What is credit life?
- Knowing your credit rights
- The do's and don'ts of debt counselling
- What to look out for when buying property or a car
- What is prescribed debt?
- Self-development

More activities will be planned to assist employees, when the COVID-19 regulations have been eased, and those include bringing some of the financial institution service providers like insurance companies, banking institutions as well as investment and mortgage companies to have face to face consultations with the staff.

Employees can still access recordings of these virtual meetings on the social media platforms like YouTube and Facebook.

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# STAY WARM THIS WINTER, THE SAFE WAY

The cold breeze and night showers that come with the winter season may be enjoyed by many, as they offer a refreshing cool down from the previous warmer months.

Trying to stay warm in the winter can often be a challenge, many opting for the use of heaters and hot water bottles. However, trying to stay warm this winter could pose health-related issues such as fires, burns and even death, caused by inhaling dangerous fumes.

The use of heaters increase in winter, whether it is gas, wood, oil or fan heaters, all of them have a safety risk attached to them, it is essential for us to remain cautious when it comes to using such tools and adhering to the warnings and instructions to prevent harm.



## Here are some ways to keep warm this winter:

- Layering up – use extra blankets, clothing and socks to keep warm.
- Do not use an electric stove to warm up the house.
- Keep children and pets a safe distance from all heating units, and do not leave them near heaters unattended.
- Do not leave heaters unattended, this includes when you leave the house or when going to sleep.
- When using gas heaters, you must ensure that the room has a reasonable amount of ventilation i.e. open windows/doors.
- Do not place objects such as blankets or socks on top of heaters, especially unattended as this could lead to fires.
- Ensure that you use a heater that does not have damaged electrical cords or wiring.
- Do not give children hot water bottles to sleep with at night.
- When using hot water bottles, ensure that it is free of leaks and the lid is fully closed.

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**KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE**  
HEALTH  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**COMPILED BY:**

**CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS**  
(KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH)

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