

## “SPRING...” BACK INTO THE SWING OF THINGS!

**Some say Spring is the season of new beginnings; of starting over a new leaf. Fresh buds bloom, plants grow, and animals awaken. Farmers and gardeners plant their seeds and temperatures slowly rise. The days become longer and the weather gets warmer. With new beginnings - comes new habits!**

Perhaps you over did it with the comfort food in winter, perhaps you stopped or reduced your time at the gym because of the cold weather – well you can wipe your slate clean and pick up your healthy lifestyle habits again and regain your “Summer body” – it’s never too late. However, before you look great- you need to feel great and Spring comes with a high volume of allergens which are problematic for asthmatic people.

If you’re a person who suffers from asthma, the allergens of spring can make it difficult to breathe. Asthma is a chronic condition in which the airways of the lungs become inflamed and narrow, often due to one or more triggers in the environment. Up to 80 percent of children and half of adults with asthma experience attacks when they come into contact with specific allergens.

During the spring, tree pollens, mould spores and grass all have the power to inflame and narrow the air passages of people who are sensitive to these natural triggers. Wheezing, shortness of breath, chest tightness and coughing are

some of the common symptoms that occur during an asthma attack.

### AMONG THE MOST COMMON TRIGGERS FOR ASTHMA ARE:

- Outdoor allergens
- Indoor allergens, including pets, dust mites and smoke
- Cold air
- Exercise
- Reflux disease (heartburn or acid indigestion)

It is very important to recognize what your triggers are, that way you can create a plan of action with your health provider.

### EASY STEPS TO FOLLOW TO TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR ASTHMA:

#### - Take a preventative stance.

If you’re especially sensitive to springtime allergens try to limit yourself to exposure to pollen sensitive areas like the garden at home or orchid at work. If you’ve been outdoors, wash your hair and clothes when you get home to get rid of those allergens. Indoors, try to clear your house of allergens that trigger you.

#### - Ask your doctor about effective medicines.

If you know you have allergies, over-the-counter

antihistamines and nasal sprays will help minimize your allergic reaction. Start your allergy medicines a week or two before allergens are due to come out Prescription medicines to prevent both asthma and allergy attacks are also encouraged should they be at your disposal- with your doctor’s/health practitioner’s consent of course.

#### - Be familiar with your inhaler.

For those times when you can’t breathe, knowing where your inhaler is, how much medicine it contains and how to use it properly can greatly relieve your breathing distress. Using your inhaler properly is really important for getting the medicine into your lungs. (If you’re not sure how to use it, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

### Common guidelines for optimal inhaler use include:

- Shake the canister for 10 seconds and take off the cap.
- Attach a spacer device to the inhaler to get more medicine into your lungs.
- Take a slow, deep breath just after you press down on the canister and inhale through your mouth, not your nose. Hold your breath for 10 seconds. After 30 seconds, repeat with a second puff and a third, if needed.

Seasonal changes can be tricky for most people’s bodies but you need not worry. Each season comes with its own health challenges but you can trust your nearest health facility to answer all your season related questions and help get you on the correct medication to subdue any if not all symptoms of asthma, allergies, and possibly flu. Let this beautiful season be the rebirth of a happier and healthier you.

**Spring is God's way of saying, 'One more time!' – Robert Orben**



# ALL HANDS ON DECK, THIS PUBLIC SERVICE MONTH

## #KHAWULEZA



September is Public Service Month. There is a series of month long celebratory and service delivery focused programmes by various government departments which will be rolled out across the country in all three spheres of government from 01 September to 04 October under the theme: "Khawuleza: taking public service to the people: we belong, we care, we serve."

During this month Public servants are reminded to follow the "Batho Pele" principles which require public servants to be polite, open and transparent and to deliver good service to the public at all sites of service delivery.

### THE PRINCIPLES;

#### 1. Consultation

Citizens should be consulted about the level and quality of the public services they receive and, wherever possible, should be given a choice about the services that are offered.

#### 2. Service standards

Citizens should be told what level and quality of public service they will receive so that they are aware of what to expect.

#### 3. Access

All citizens should have equal access to the services to which they are entitled.

#### 4. Courtesy

Citizens should be treated with courtesy and consideration.

#### 5. Information

Citizens should be given full accurate information about the public services they are entitled to receive.

#### 6. Openness and transparency

Citizens should be told how national and provincial departments are run, how much they cost and who is in charge.

#### 7. Redress

If the promised standard of service is not delivered, citizens should be offered an apology, a full explanation and

a speedy and effective remedy; and when complaints are made, citizens should receive a sympathetic, positive response.

#### 8. Value for money

Public services should be provided economically and efficiently in order to give citizens the best possible value for money

Government officials are on the ground interacting with citizens at service delivery sites. Some KZN health facilities like Port Shepstone Hospital's Thuthuzela Care Centre in the Ugu district and Ngwelezana Hospital in the King Cetshwayo District Municipality this week formed part of the government

integrated Public Service month programme as they were visited by Deputy Minister for the Public Service and Administration, Ms Sindisiwe Chikunga.

There is also a pledge by public servants to recommit to the Batho Pele Principles and the Service Charter, a social contract to serve with integrity and professionalism, while visibly portraying a positive attitude.



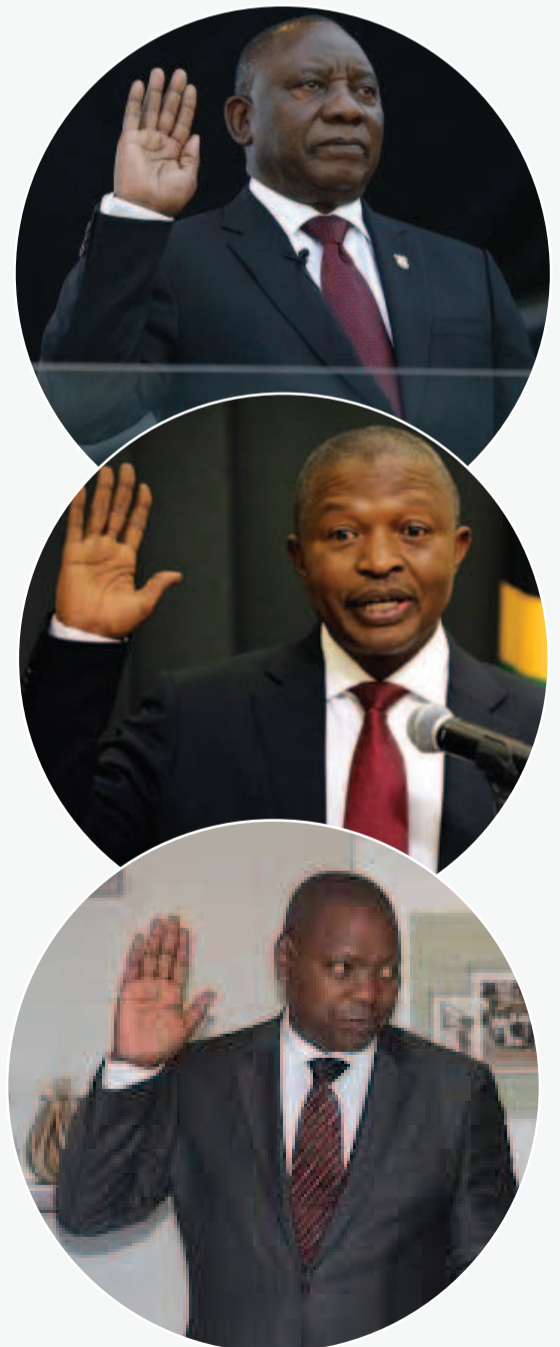
## PLEDGE ON THE PUBLIC SERVICE CHARTER

**As a public servant, I commit to embrace discipline in the implementation of government priorities, comply with the legislation, portray compassion to all my colleagues and the public and deliver efficiency in the performance of my duties.**

I obligate to abide by the Constitutional values and principles guiding public administration in the execution of my daily duties as a public servant.

### I BIND MYSELF TO:

- serve the public in an unbiased and impartial manner in order to create confidence in the State
- provide timely service to the development and advancement of all South Africans by putting them first
- respect and protect every person's dignity and rights as contained in the Constitution
- not engage in any transaction or action that is in conflict with or infringes on the execution of my official duties.
- act against fraud, corruption, nepotism, maladministration and any other act which constitutes an offence, or which is prejudicial to the public interest.
- demonstrate professionalism, competency, excellence, transparency and impartiality in the performance of my official duties



# KZN HEALTH MEC ANNOUNCES NEW PSYCHOLOGICAL DEBRIEFING PROGRAMME TO HELP STAFF WHO ARE EXPOSED TO TRAUMA

**KwaZulu-Natal Health MEC Ms Nomagugu Simelane-Zulu wants all healthcare workers who have been exposed to traumatic incidents to be given the opportunity to undergo psychological debriefing in order to help them cope.**

Speaking at a Departmental Women's Month community outreach programme held at Madadeni Hospital at Amajuba District (Newcastle), MEC Simelane-Zulu said the Department has already started conceptualising the programme, which would strengthen its capacity to attend to the psychological needs of its doctors, nurses, paramedics, forensic pathology, and other essential services staff who have been exposed to horrific incidents of loss of human life, and other grisly scenes.

The MEC vowed that the new structure, which will boost the existing but under-resourced Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), should be up and running in the next six months.

This, coupled with the ongoing efforts to lobby for funding that will ensure the unfreezing of more posts in hospitals and clinics, is among numerous interventions by MEC Simelane-Zulu which are meant to relieve overburdened healthcare workers, improve their working conditions, and overall client experience.

To illustrate the need for efficient staff counseling, MEC Simelane-Zulu cited a recent case at a women's social gathering where two female doctors were lamenting how people like them are forced to "move on" very quickly after losing patients.

"One of them said, 'Someone comes into the facility with a stab wound. I try all I can to save this life, but I'm sometimes unable to because we know how life is. But, instead of getting an opportunity to be debriefed, I must go and treat another person with gunshot wounds.' She's just experienced someone dying for the first time; she has not dealt with it in her own mind; but she must move on. But this is something that will stay with her for the rest of her life. What is worse is that as she leaves to treat another person, the sister or nurse left behind must go and tell the family that their loved one has passed on. What does that do to that healthcare worker? Do we have a programme as a Department of assisting all these health workers to deal with these matters? Because these issues

go to the heart. They affect us psychologically."

MEC Simelane-Zulu said she had already begun discussions with the Department's Human Resources Management unit on how healthcare workers must be assisted.

"We must come up with a programme that assists our frontline health workers to deal with these situations. We've spoken to HR. We're going to launch the programme, and we are going to do it very soon.

"In that programme, we must have a psychologist, a clinician, a nurse... we can agree who else we add, but those are core in any facility, so that we're able to deal with the psychological effects of what we face on a daily basis. We're hoping to implement it in the next six months. We've even decided on where we're going to launch it."

The MEC said the Department would continue to have regular staff engagements, "where we sit down with our employees, to find out what the problem is, and where can we help. We're going to start doing that."

She also appealed to the Department's 80 000 workers to become its health ambassadors by spreading messages regarding disease prevention; the importance of testing and screening for HIV, and Non-Communicable Diseases such as cancer, diabetes and hypertension; and advocating for family planning; among others.

The MEC also called on all healthcare workers to treat the public with respect and courtesy at all times.

# WHO SAID WHAT THIS WEEK?

"Relationships should not result in death; they should be loving and supportive. We need stronger interventions if women are to enjoy the fruits of our democracy the same way the majority of men do. Enough is enough". - **Minister of the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities Nkoana-Mashabane**

"As much as they have certain grievances I have said that taking action against people from other nations should never be allowed. SA is a home for all. We are not the only country that has become home for people who are fleeing their own countries," he said - **Cyril Ramaphosa, President of South Africa**

"The issues that we have set out here, such as [ensuring] that there are harsher penalties, is precisely what we can address. The killing of women must be brought to an end. We want the men our country to take responsibility for the slaughtering of women ... stop raping the women of our country and killing them. As a government, we will heighten the safety and protection of the women of our nation." - **Cyril Ramaphosa, President of South Africa**

"I think we have dilly-dallied long enough. We cannot afford not to implement the NHI." - **Dr Zweli Mkhize, Minister of Health**



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# ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT KZN DOH RESEARCH DAY

## 13 SEPTEMBER 2019



**Research remains a very important tool for taking the health service forward. Departmental managers, clinicians and staff are urged to embrace the conduct of research in the province, both in terms of undertaking research themselves and also in using the research results of others to advance service delivery. Health Chat Bulletin caught up with Dr Elizabeth Lutge from the Research Unit to unpack the upcoming "Research Day".**

### **What should the public understand about the KZN DOH Research Day?**

The KZN DOH Research Day is a programme of presentations by researchers who have recently conducted health research in KZN. It is an important opportunity for DOH staff to engage with these researchers on their findings and the implications of these findings for policy and practice in the DOH.

**Please reflect on the significance of this day and research papers themselves in relation to the current discourse on**

### **the future health system NHI?**

The KZN DOH Research Day is always significant because it allows research findings to reach the ears of those who can act on them – the managers and staff of the KZN DOH. This Research Day will be no different, but in the context of NHI, will be especially important because of the changes to the health system and its funding that NHI will necessitate. In this year's Research Day, there will be many papers on the burden of disease in KZN, which is important for NHI because the health system will need to be geared to address the disease burden of the whole population efficiently and effectively. One of the plenary sessions will consist of reflections on how health policies are made, in response to a health issue, and how they may need to be amended or even abolished, once that health issue has been controlled. This is an important learning opportunity for NHI, where new policies will be bought into force and will need to be reviewed and amended regularly. Another of the plenary sessions will look at health research, and how this should be tailored to the KZN context in support of policy development – again, an important aspect of NHI.

### **Who is eligible to participate on this day, what are the criteria?**

We invite any interested staff to attend, but ask that they let us know if they will be coming, so that we can ensure catering is adequate. Staff who intend to come should email **Ms Vuyiswa Siwela in the Epidemiology Unit (Vuyiswa.siwela@kznhealth.gov.za)**

### **How many papers will be presented and what is their status?**

Approximately 30 research projects will be presented.

### **Is the Department able to use or integrate any lessons from the research findings to the current health system?**

This is hopefully exactly what the Department will be doing with the findings, which is why we encourage managers at all levels to attend the Research Day. We hope that managers will find the presentations relevant to their work, and be able to use the findings to improve the services that they offer.

### **Lastly can we reflect on any current research projects that are ongoing in the province and the subject focus?**

There are many research

projects ongoing in KZN at the moment. Research in KZN is and has been extremely important in the global context – very high quality research is conducted in KZN, which informs global practices in health care. For example, research in HIV has changed global policies on the disease, and has resulted in new treatments that may not

have been developed otherwise. Similarly, research into TB, health systems, health ethics and other facets of health has been conducted in KZN and has influenced global thinking on these issues.



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PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

*Save  
the  
Date!*

KWAZULU-NATAL  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH'S  
**ANNUAL HEALTH  
RESEARCH DAY**

**Date** : Friday, 13 September 2019  
**Venue** : Inkosi Albert Luthuli Central Hospital  
Residence Hall  
**Time** : 08h30 - 13h30

RSVP by the 6<sup>th</sup> of September 2019 to: Vuyiswa Siwela  
E-mail : [Vuyiswa.siwela@kznhealth.gov.za](mailto:Vuyiswa.siwela@kznhealth.gov.za)  
Tel : 033 395 2102

**TEA & LUNCH WILL BE SERVED**



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# INTENSIFYING ENGAGEMENT ON



The KwaZulu Natal Department of Health is scaling up internal engagements on NHI in a bid to empower its human capital with adequate knowledge on the future health system. Deputy Director-Director Mfowethu Zungu held a National Health Insurance (NHI) workshop with the Public Relations Officers (PROs) of the Department this week. He delved into every detail of NHI and encouraged the PROs to

become ambassadors of this historical national programme.

“As employees of the Department it is important to be updated on the Department’s policy changes because policy influences how we do everything, including what and how we communicate to the public. The MEC and the Head of Health can only do so much. It is up to you to become ambassadors.” he said.

# HAVE YOUR SAY

## National Health Insurance Bill [B11-2019]

**The Portfolio Committee on Health invites interested individuals and relevant stakeholders to submit written comments and indicate interest in making an oral submission on the National Health Insurance Bill [B11 – 2019].**

The objective of the Bill is to achieve universal access to quality health care services in the Republic in accordance with section 27 of the Constitution; to establish a National Health Insurance Fund and to set out its powers, functions and governance structures; to provide a framework for the strategic purchasing of health care services by the Fund on behalf of users; to create mechanisms for the equitable, effective and efficient utilisation of the resources of the Fund to meet the health needs of the population; to preclude or limit undesirable, unethical and unlawful practices in relation to the Fund and its users; and to provide for matters connected herewith.

**WRITTEN  
SUBMISSIONS**

**MUST BE DIRECTED TO:**

**MS VUYOKAZI MAJALAMBA AND BE ADDRESSED TO THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, 3RD FLOOR, 90 PLEIN STREET, CAPE TOWN, 8000.**

**OR EMAIL TO:**

**VMAJALAMBA@PARLIAMENT.GOV.ZA OR FAX TO 086 694 3279 BY NO LATER THAN 11 OCTOBER 2019. IN ADDITION TO THE WRITTEN COMMENTS, PLEASE INDICATE YOUR INTEREST IN MAKING A VERBAL PRESENTATION. COPIES OF THE BILL CAN BE OBTAINED FROM MS VUYOKAZI MAJALAMBA (021) 403 3770, CELL: 083 709 8522 OR AT WWW.PARLIAMENT.GOV.ZA**

*Issued by Dr SM Dhlomo, MP-Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Health*



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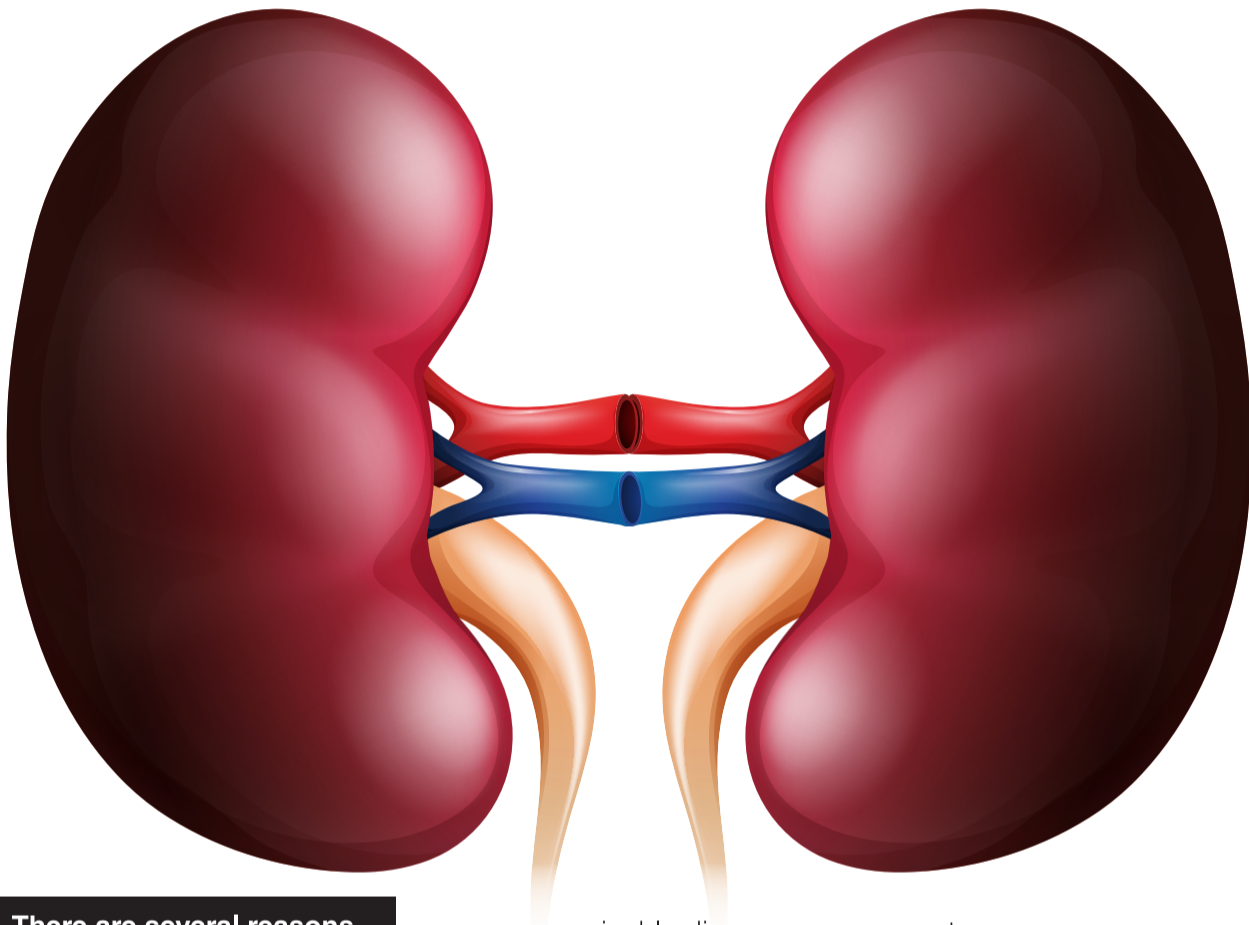
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# ACT NOW:

## WATCH YOUR WEIGHT FOR THE SAKE OF YOUR KIDNEYS



There are several reasons why you may be at risk of being diagnosed with kidney disease. Fortunately, most of these causes can be prevented. Kidney Awareness Week, which runs from 1-7 August annually, brings awareness and education to the public on this largely preventable illness and the actions to take to combat it.

One cause of kidney disease is food intake: this may manifest as malnutrition or over-nutrition. Malnutrition is eating less than your body needs whilst overnutrition is overfeeding yourself.

The good news is that if you are diagnosed with early stage kidney disease, severe kidney disease can be prevented and, if diagnosed early, worsening of the functioning of the organs can be slowed or averted by inexpensive interventions, several of which are recommended by the the World Health Organization's (WHO's) list for

noncommunicable disease management.

### SUCH INTERVENTIONS INCLUDE:

- counselling for cardiovascular disease, diabetes and hypertension
- drug therapy
- tobacco control
- promotion of physical activity and
- the reduction of salt intake

### DID YOU KNOW?

*Noncommunicable diseases, such as diabetes, cancer and heart disease, are collectively responsible for over 70% of all deaths worldwide, or 41 million people. This includes 15 million people dying prematurely, aged between 30 and 69.*

*The rise of these diseases has been driven by five major risk factors: tobacco use, physical inactivity, the harmful use of alcohol, unhealthy diets and air pollution. These risk factors also exacerbate mental health issues, that may originate from an early age: half of all mental illness begins by the age of 14, but most cases go undetected and untreated – suicide is the second leading cause of death among 15-19 year-olds.*

# NO HEALTH WITHOUT ORAL HEALTH



The WHO defines oral health as “a state of being free from chronic mouth and facial pain, oral and throat cancer, oral infection and sores, periodontal (gum) disease, tooth decay, tooth loss, and other diseases and disorders that limit an individual's capacity in biting, chewing, smiling and speaking.”

The KZN Department of health promotes oral health in the province by providing equitable and cost effective services based on the principles of primary health care through the District Health System. Maintaining good oral health is essential to maintaining good overall health. The effects of poor oral hygiene range from tooth decay, cavities, gingivitis, periodontitis and tooth loss. Fortunately proper oral hygiene includes cleaning teeth correctly and regularly which prevents most of these problems.

### Tips for proper oral hygiene:

- Keep your teeth clean and cavity free by following a regular dental care routine of brushing and flossing twice a day.
- Use fluoridated toothpaste and brush thoroughly
- Floss your teeth daily
- Limit acidic drinks like soft drinks, cordials and fruit juices
- Limit sugary foods and
- Protect your teeth from injury



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Even if you take excellent care of your teeth and gums at home, you still need to see a dentist regularly. People with very little risk of cavities or gum disease can see their dentist just once a year. People with a high risk of dental disease might need to visit every three or four months, or more.

### This high-risk group includes:

- Smokers
- Pregnant women
- Diabetics
- People with current gum disease
- People with a weak immune response to bacterial infection
- People who tend to get cavities or build up plaque

The schedule for any person may change during a lifetime. In times of stress or illness, you may need to see the dentist more often than usual. The dentist may help you to fight off a temporary infection or treat changes in your mouth.

### KZN interventions on oral health:

The oral health campaign has been rolled out at ± 600 schools in KwaZulu-Natal. The Department of Health works with partners in Colgate Palmolive South Africa, DENTSPLY and Dental Warehouse, in order to drive oral health education. People with complicated oral health are referred to Inkosi Albert Luthuli Central Hospital, King Dini Zulu Hospital Complex, King Edwards Hospital, Ngwelezane Hospital and Greys Hospital.

# INVENTIONS THAT SHAPED THE WORLD: NEONATAL PHOTOTHERAPY: SISTER JEAN WARD

**Sunlight helps babies with jaundice, a condition that makes infants appear yellow due to high bilirubin levels in their blood. Many babies have high bilirubin levels, which occur when the body creates new red blood cells. Usually the liver helps break bilirubin down, but many babies' livers don't work very efficiently at first.**

In the 1950s, Sister Jean Ward discovered that sunlight helped her charges. Convinced that fresh air and warm sunlight helped the babies she cared for as a nurse in the premature unit at Rochford General Hospital in Essex, England, Ward would bring the babies outdoors. When she brought one child

inside one day, a doctor noticed one section of skin that had been covered by the corner of a blanket was yellower than the rest of the baby's body. Now medical professionals use phototherapy to treat jaundiced babies.

Source: *The Embryo Project Encyclopedia*

<https://embryo.asu.edu/pages/light-therapy-neonatal-jaundice>

# ALBINISM AWARENESS



**Albinism Awareness is observed in the month of September each year. Albinism is caused by defects in the genetics that determine colour in the skin, eyes and hair. People who have normal pigmentation could be carriers of the genetic material that is defective and can therefore pass their defective genetic information onto their children which could then lead them to have albinism.**

It is important to note that a child with albinism receives its genetic coding from both parents and that it is common for parents with normal skin colour to have a child with albinism. Parents of a baby with albinism should never feel guilty about this, it is not their fault.

## Here are tips you can follow to protect your skin from sun damage:

### Apply Sunscreens

People with albinism should use sunscreens labelled SPF 20 to 30. "SPF" means "Sun Protection Factor." This number comes from a standard test in a laboratory. The test measures the time it takes people wearing a standard amount of sunscreen to sunburn under a standard ultraviolet lamp, compared to the time with no sunscreen. In theory, if a person could stay in the sun 10 minutes without burning with no sunscreen, he or she could wear an SPF 20 sunscreen and stay in the sun 20 times 10 minutes or 200 minutes before burning.

### Avoiding Harmful Rays

It is important not to rely on sunscreens, and to limit exposure to the sun. Most ultraviolet rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Standard Time, or 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. Daylight Savings Time. Planning outdoor activities for morning or evening is better for people with albinism to avoid sun damage.

### Clothing and Hats

Clothing is important. Up to 50% of the ultraviolet rays can go through wet cotton tee shirts worn for swimming. Coloured clothing and denser-woven clothing allow less light penetration. Several manufacturers are promoting densely woven "breathable" synthetic fibre clothes for sun protection. These allow protection with long sleeves in warm weather.



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# GALLERY

## NHI WORKSHOP - UMGUNGUNDLOVU DISTRICT





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