

## KZN HEALTH MEC URGES BUSINESS COMMUNITY TO HELP **LIMIT CUSTOMER NUMBERS** IN ORDER TO AVOID RETURN TO LEVEL 5

KZN Health MEC Ms Nomagugu Simelane-Zulu has urged the business community – particularly those in the food and entertainment sector – to abide by Level 1 lockdown regulations in order to curb the spread of COVID – 19.



Speaking on the Department's online multi-media programme LunchtimeChat.Gov recently, MEC Simelane-Zulu warned that if measures to curb the spread of COVID – 19 are not adhered to, this could trigger a return to Lockdown Level 5, dealing a further major blow to jobs and the economy.

In terms of Alert Level 1 lockdown regulations, gatherings at social events are limited to 250 people or less in case of an indoor gathering; and 500 persons or less in case of an outdoor gathering. This is, provided that no more than 50 percent of the capacity of the venue is used, with people observing a distance of least one and a half metres from each other.

MEC Simelane-Zulu said: "We're pleading with owners of establishments that people go to in order to have a 'good time'... to enforce these regulations, because if we don't take them seriously, it could mean that in a few months' time, we could return to Lockdown Level 5. Then, we will not be able to go out because our infections will be growing. "I wish to emphasise that there are a number of countries... In China, for instance, there was a time when they went for 30 days without registering a single infection. And then suddenly, they registered 2000 cases in one day.

In France, they recently had the highest number of infections that they have had in a very long time... 7000 infections in one day. "So, we really do not want this second wave of COVID – 19 to come back, because we don't really know how strong it is. Stopping the second wave really is in our hands. We can make a huge difference by conducting ourselves properly, in a way that prevents the spread of the virus."

The MEC also sounded alarm bells about criminals who are incessantly posting false job advertisements online, purporting to invite applications from unsuspecting job-seekers in order to solicit money. Recently, the Department was made aware of a bogus advert inviting job applications at Madadeni Hospital. Prior to this, complaints were received about Departmental employees allegedly "selling" administrative clerk posts related to COVID – 19. The MEC says both matters have been reported to the SAPS and were being investigated.

"First and foremost, we want to reiterate that there is not a single Government job that is up for sale. Posts are advertised on reliable and reputable public mediums (newspapers, official Government websites and official social media pages). People then have to apply, get shortlisted, called up for interviews, and then employed. So, we are really

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appealing to our compatriots... we know that jobs are scarce, and people need them, but let us not allow ourselves to fall victim to criminals." The LunchTimeChat.Gov programme – which is fast becoming a portal for members of the media to source content from - also shone the spotlight on Eye care Awareness, in line with the October health calendar. It saw the MEC calling on the public to undergo screening for eye-related ailments at least once a year. She also emphasised that catching ailments at an early stage can lead to treatment being administered timely, which significantly improves the chances of recovery.

**During the engagement, studio guest Dr Noluthando Pupuma, who is an ophthalmologist (eye care specialist) at Ngwelezane Hospital, shared tips on eye care, including:**

- The importance of engaging in regular physical exercise in order to prevent risk factors for diabetes, which lead to eye-related complications;
- Following a healthy and balanced diet made up of fish, leafy greens, eggs, whole grains; kidney beans, black-eyed peas, and lentils; citrus fruit (oranges, lemons, grapefruit, and berries); nuts;
- Adhering to treatment for diabetes as prescribed by healthcare professionals; and

- Seeking treatment urgently when changes to eyesight are noticed, without waiting until complications set in.

Other lifestyle changes that can help prevent eye-related problems include: Limiting time spent in front of the TV or computer screen; getting enough sleep; not rubbing the eyes because it can damage the cornea; wearing sunglasses; refraining from smoking; using proper lighting because dim light leads to eye fatigue, dry eyes, redness, pain, and headaches; and not sleeping with contact lenses, as it can lead to eye infection and permanent damage.

LunchtimeChat.Gov is an innovative multi-media initiative of the KZN Department of Health. The programme is broadcast live at 1pm every Friday on the Department's official Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram pages.

Members of the public with health-related concerns or challenge are invited to call in by dialing **078 617 9760**, or to call via WhatsApp on **082 314 1167** (The WhatsApp number also accepts voice notes, which are played live on air.)

The show is also broadcast on **1KZN (DStv Channel 261)** at 14h30 on Saturdays.



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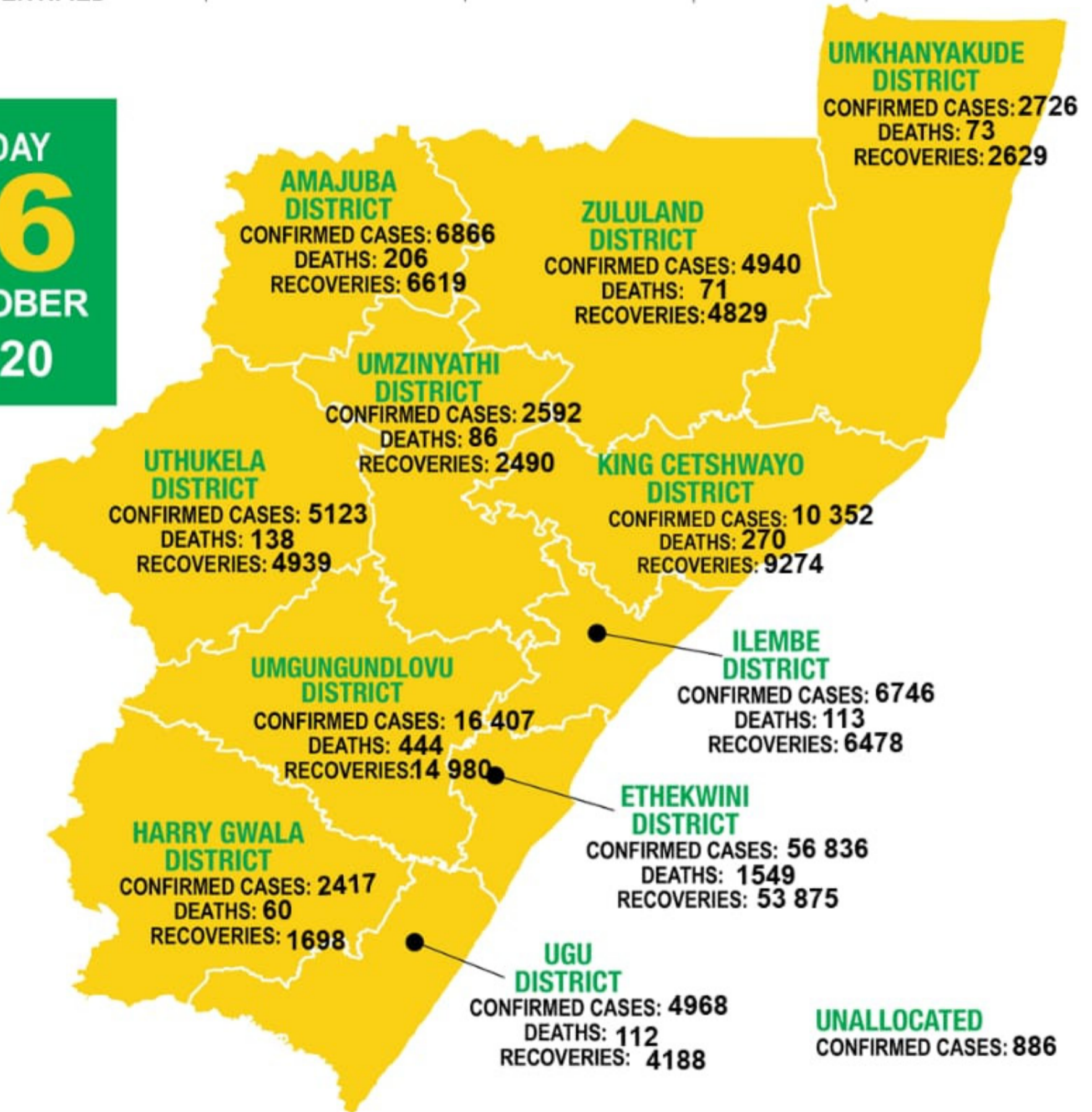
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# COVID-19 STATISTICS IN **KZN**

				
<b>120 859</b>	<b>5738</b>	<b>111999</b>	<b>3122</b>	<b>139</b>
POSITIVE CASES IDENTIFIED	ACTIVE CASES	RECOVERIES	DEATHS	NEW CASES

FRIDAY  
**16**  
OCTOBER  
2020



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# PREMIER ZIKALALA'S UPDATE ON COVID-19 IN THE PROVINCE



On Sunday, 11 October, the KZN Premier Mr Sihle Zikalala, and KZN Health MEC Ms Nomagugu Simelane-Zulu jointly briefed the media and the public on the highlights of the province, especially with regards to the COVID-19 trajectory.

The update on COVID-19 response is as follows:

## DEVELOPMENTS OVER THE PAST THREE WEEKS

(16 September to date) Although we continue to be the second highest province countrywide in terms of laboratory-confirmed cases, we have nevertheless observed a decline in the number of new cases in the past 3 weeks. The actual number of COVID – 19 cases for week 39 was 980; for week 40 it was 875; and for week 41 it was 682.

The number of new cases declined by 11% between week 39-40. A further 22% decrease was observed between weeks 40-41. This also coincides with the weekly cumulative incidence risk. For week 39, the incidence risk was nine cases per 100 000; during week 40 it was eight cases per 100 000; and during week 41 it was six cases per 100 000. We are indeed pleased to report that the

Province is observing a steady decline in incidence risk.

### Deaths

The number of new deaths received weekly declined by 42% for week 39-40. A further 30% decline was observed between week 40-41. The analysis was done using the date of death of the deceased. The case fatality rate remains at 2%, and the mortality rate is 27 deaths per 100 000 population.

### Testing rate

KwaZulu-Natal Province has been among the provinces that have observed a consistent percentage of people testing positive in the past three weeks. In the past week (week 40), the province was the second highest in terms of tests conducted countrywide (16%), following Gauteng (31%). The percentage testing positive was between <10% for KwaZulu-Natal. This means that the positivity rate remains lower as compared to other provinces.

• Although the number of cases is declining weekly, we are urging citizens of this province to continue adhering to lockdown regulations, such as:

- o Wearing of masks
- o Hand washing and sanitization
- o Social distancing
- o Avoiding gatherings

• The province should and will continue with community and facility screening and testing so that we may not miss cases.

**\*NB: According to resurgence plan, the province should consider the following:** Under control A less than <10% increase or a decrease in new COVID-19 cases compared to preceding 7 days

Alert A greater than >10% increase and <20% increase in new COVID-19 cases compared to preceding 7 days

Resurgence A greater than >20% increase in new COVID-19 cases compared to preceding 7 days

### Infected health care workers

A total of 7 730 health care workers (HCWs) were infected with COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic. Above 70% of the infected HCWs have recovered. Of the total infected, 68 (1%) (Case fatality rate) succumbed to the disease.

The majority of the infected health care workers (IHCW) were nurses (58%) and lay counsellors (35%). Among the IHCWs, 76% work in the public sector facilities. The majority of the deaths among the IHCWs occurred in the public sector (82%), with a case fatality rate of 1%.

### Hospital admissions/isolations

On 10 October 2020, the province had 477 patients admitted in both private (n=358, 75%) and public (n=119, 25%) hospitals. Of those admitted, 73 patients (15%) required intensive care services. Private hospitals had more patients in ICU (93%, n=68) than public facilities (7%, n=5). Among those who required intensive care, 30% (n=22) were ventilated. Other patients, 12% (n=56) were admitted in high care units in both private (86%, n=48) and public (14=8) facilities.

### Recoveries

The overall proportion of recoveries for the province is 93%. Harry Gwala District is still experiencing challenges due to an influx of cases from the Eastern Cape, which has been affecting their recovery rate and incidence risk.

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# HANDWASHING: ANOTHER DEFENCE AGAINST COVID-19

*This week on the 15th of October the world observed the Global Handwashing Day, something we all gotten familiar with since the outbreak of COVID-19. The day aims to increase awareness and understanding about the importance of proper handwashing as an effective and affordable way to prevent diseases.*



Germ and bacteria are everywhere, some are good and even helpful, and however, some are harmful and could cause diseases and infections. Over the past few months, we have heard about the importance of hand hygiene more than ever before, as it is one of the numerous precautionary measures we have been practicing to eliminate the risk of getting the COVID-19 viral infection.

## HOW GERMS SPREAD:

Many people spread germs through their hands without even realizing, and these germs are taken from one person to the other. These are some of the ways germs can be spread:

- Touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands, germs can get into the body through these and might make you sick
- Preparing foods with unwashed hands can easily spread germs into your food and some germs can multiply in food
- Germs from unwashed hands can be transferred to everyday objects that we frequently touch such as our cellphones, computers, door handles, keys and other people's hands.

## WHEN TO WASH YOUR HANDS:

You can break the cycle of disease and keep yourself and loved ones healthy by washing your hands often, especially during these times:

- Washing your hands after using the toilet
- Before, during and after preparing and eating food
- Washing hands after handling garbage
- Washing hands before feeding children and others
- After changing babies nappies
- After touching animals
- Before and after treating a wound
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.

## HOW TO WASH YOUR HANDS:

1. Wet your hands thoroughly with clean water and lather with soap
2. Rub palms together to scrub
3. Rub between fingers
4. Rub the back of your hands
5. Clean underneath your nails
6. Wash your wrists
7. Rinse thoroughly with clean water and then dry your hands with a clean paper towel.



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# GET BACK ON TRACK; TAKE CARE OF YOUR BACK



World Spinal Cord Day is commemorated on 16th of October every year to raise awareness around spinal health issues and disabilities associated with spinal injuries.

This day highlights the importance of spinal health and well-being, promotion of physical activity, good posture, responsible lifting and healthy working conditions. Individuals are urged to look after their spines and to stay active.

The year 2020 has been a difficult year. With the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic affecting millions of people worldwide, lockdown restrictions have led to a lack of physical activity that has made people more inclined or at risk of spinal pain and disability.

Low back pain is a universal human experience; almost everyone has it at some point. The lower back, which starts below the ribcage, is called the lumbar region. Pain here can be intense and is one of the top causes of missed work. Fortunately, low back pain often gets better on its own. When it doesn't, there are effective treatments.

## BACK PAIN SYMPTOMS

Back pain can have many symptoms, including:

- a dull aching sensation in the lower back
- a stabbing or shooting pain that can radiate down the leg to the foot
- an inability to stand up straight without pain
- a decreased range of motion and diminished ability to flex the back

The symptoms of back pain, if due to strain or misuse, are usually short-lived but can last for days or weeks. Back pain is chronic when symptoms have been present for longer than three months. It is advisable to visit the nearest doctor.

## HOW TO PREVENT BACK PAIN

While you can't stop aging or change your genetic makeup, lifestyle changes can help manage and

prevent lower back pain. Having a healthy lifestyle may make you less likely to suffer an accidental injury, too.

These eight (8) tips can help ease back pain when it happens. They can also help you prevent back pain in the first place.

### • Exercise:

Regular exercise helps build strength and control body weight.

### • Diet:

Make sure your diet includes enough calcium and vitamin D, as these are needed for bone health. A healthful diet also helps control body weight.

### • Lift heavy objects the right way.

Be sure to squat while lifting so that your hips and knees do much of the work. Keep the load close to your chest while you lift.

### • Bed:

You should have a mattress that keeps your spine straight, while at the same time supporting the weight of your shoulders and buttocks

### • Stretch often:

Doing the same thing every day can leave your muscles fatigued and more apt to strain. Stretch regularly to help improve circulation in those muscles and lower the risk of back pain and damage.

### • Improve your posture:

Poor posture can put unnecessary pressure and strain on your spine. Over time, this can lead to pain and damage. A good seat for working should have good back support, arm rests and a swivel base.

## TREATMENT

Taking some painkillers, staying active and doing some specific exercises are generally the most helpful treatments for people with back pain. However, some people will need further medical treatment such as manual therapy, massage, mobilization, or spinal manipulation.

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# SCHOOL CHILDREN'S HEALTH COMES FIRST

**From October 12 to 16 is School Health Week and government has pledged to put the health of school children first by hosting the School Health Screening Programme.**

The programme brings basic health screening to learners at schools in areas that have been identified as priority health districts. These include schools in areas least likely to have access to health care services.

The Department of Health, in partnership with the Department of Basic Education, conducts basic health screening for foundation phase, intermediate phase, senior phase, and Further Education and Training (FET) or grade 10-12 learners. The programme offers a comprehensive and integrated package of services including sexual and reproductive health services for older learners. The school health package includes health screening, on-site service, and health education.

Learners below the age of 18 years should only be provided with school health services with written consent of their parent or caregiver. No learner who does not assent to being screened or provided with services should be coerced into receiving services.

The Department's vision of "Optimal Health for all people of KwaZulu-Natal" also encompasses the development of school-going children and the communities in which they live and learn. The Department has a goal to contribute to the improvement of the general health of school-going children as well as the environmental conditions in schools and address health barriers to learning in order to improve education outcomes of access to school, retention within school and achievement at school.

The Integrated School Health Programme is part of the comprehensive primary health package which operates within the Department of Basic Education's (DBE) Care and Support for Teaching and Learning Programme (CSTL). The principles are to focus on achievement of health and educational outcomes; Be implemented within a child's rights approach.

This means that children should not be passive recipients, but must be empowered actors in their own development; Ensure full coverage of all learners starting in the most disadvantaged schools; Ensure that appropriate assessment, treatment, care and support services are

available and accessible to all learners who are identified as requiring them; Be informed by local priorities;

Take into account quality and equitable distribution of resources; Be implemented as a partnership between the Department of Health, Basic Education, Social Development and all other relevant stakeholders and role-players; Be guided by ethical standards as outlined in the principles of professional bodies (such as the South African Nursing Council and Health Professions Council of South Africa).

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