

COVID - 19 SECOND WAVE THREAT:

A PREMATURE RETURN TO THE “OLD NORMAL” COULD PROVE CATASTROPHIC

The noticeable decline in the rate of new COVID – 19 infections and deaths, particularly in KwaZulu-Natal, is a welcome development, given the unprecedented swathe of destruction and personal suffering that this virus has caused across the world, including in our beautiful country and province.

While it may be fortuitous that this decline has coincided with the downgrading of the National Lockdown to Level 2, there exists a great danger whereby citizens, desperate for a return to even the slightest semblance of the “old normalcy,” may be lulled into a false sense of safety.

South Africans are known for their love for having a good time. Unfortunately, we tend to want to overdo things sometimes, which can have disastrous results. With the uplifting of the ban on alcohol, cigarettes, public dining, sporting events, and intra-provincial travel, the world has begun to look and feel familiar – even though so much has changed.

However, recent observations of people

congregating in large numbers in public spaces, socialising, and partying “like it’s 1999” – are a great cause for concern. Newspapers and online news websites are awash with stories of public establishments full to the brim, showing scant regard for regulations which limit the number of people who may gather at any given time.

But, a cursory glance at recent developments across the world will reveal a sense of panic and mayhem that has once again gripped countries like the US, Spain, Vietnam, New Zealand and South Korea as they grapple with a second wave of COVID – 19 infections.

Far from business as usual, we as South Africans are actually at a precipice; a crossroads of sorts. We can either choose to go back to the “old normal” and suffer a potentially more devastating

outbreak of new infections and deaths; or we can embrace the New Normal and write our own destiny by practicing self-discipline and self-control.

The sooner we acknowledge that COVID-19 is still lurking around, and ready to pounce if we let our guard down, the better for everyone. Even for those who have tested positive and were fortunate enough to recover from it, the threat of getting re-infected is alive and well.

By acknowledging the grave danger that we are still facing, and changing our behaviour, we could have a great opportunity at securing our immediate, mid-term, and long-term future.

AVOIDING THE SPRING AND SUMMER OF DISCONTENT

The arrival of spring heralds a much-awaited change in atmosphere that calls for more outdoor activities. This is, of course, is a long-overdue boon for the long-suffering tourism and hospitality industry which, while being among the biggest contributors to job-creation, has been battered by COVID – 19, bleeding thousands of jobs.

True to form, the mysterious and disruptive COVID – 19 has presented a real dilemma for Governments the world

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over: do you re-open the economy at the expense of people's lives? Of what use are livelihoods when people are dying in large numbers?

It has been an unenviable dichotomy. In the end, tough choices and compromises have had to be made.

With Level 2 should come a new attitude and way of life among those who cannot resist alcohol. It is high time they realised that if they go back to their old ways, they run the risk of getting injured or dying due to interpersonal conflicts or road crashes - or worse, injuring or killing innocent fellow road users.

Given what is at stake, the privilege of Level 2 should jolt each and every individual into becoming an-Anti COVID – 19 ambassador who adheres to all the precautions, from wearing face masks when venturing into the public; to washing hands regularly with soap and water or hand sanitiser; and maintaining social distancing.

But it shouldn't end there. We should also be on the lookout for those who are not adhering to these precautions, and talk them into changing their ways. Of course, without being confrontational. Where we see examples of the violation of the lockdown regulations, we should not hesitate to alert the authorities, so that the appropriate corrective action can be taken.

This is in the interest of us all.

ACKNOWLEDGING OUR WORKFORCE

It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge our healthcare workers for the gallant role that they've played in fighting COVID – 19. We have just finished commemorating women's month under a unique and unprecedented period in our country, as we face up to the new and invisible enemy that is COVID - 19.

In these times of adversity, it has been immensely encouraging to witness many truly remarkable acts of bravery, resilience and the triumph of the human spirit – particularly where women are concerned.

As a Department that is one of the biggest employers of women, we are humbled at the opportunity of saving people's lives.

Their courageous response to the lingering threat of a disease with so many unknowns has been an experience and sight to behold. They have given meaning to the Freedom Charter, which declares that: "...Medical care and hospitalisation shall be provided for all, with special care for mothers and young children..."

These are, after all, our mothers, sisters, aunts, cousins, neighbours and friends. To them, we doff our hats in affirming our recognition and appreciation of their efforts. We appreciate you. We thank you. We know we would never win this war without you. To all those health workers that we have lost along the way,

CONDOLENCES TO THOSE THAT WE'VE LOST

we will always remember you as our heroes. May your souls rest in peace, and your families be comforted.

To all the brave women and men who have continued to soldier on, in spite of the threat posed by COVID – 19, we urge you to remain strong and follow the precautions.

Do not let your guard down. Make use of the available Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) provided to you.

Always remember: any person or location within the workplace, in public, or at home, is at all times potentially infectious.

Lastly, to ordinary South Africans and visitors, let us play our part in minimising the grave danger that we are facing.

The year 2020 has not been good. From now onwards, we have an opportunity and responsibility to ensure that this is not the spring and summer of our discontent.

It really is in our hands.



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KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health



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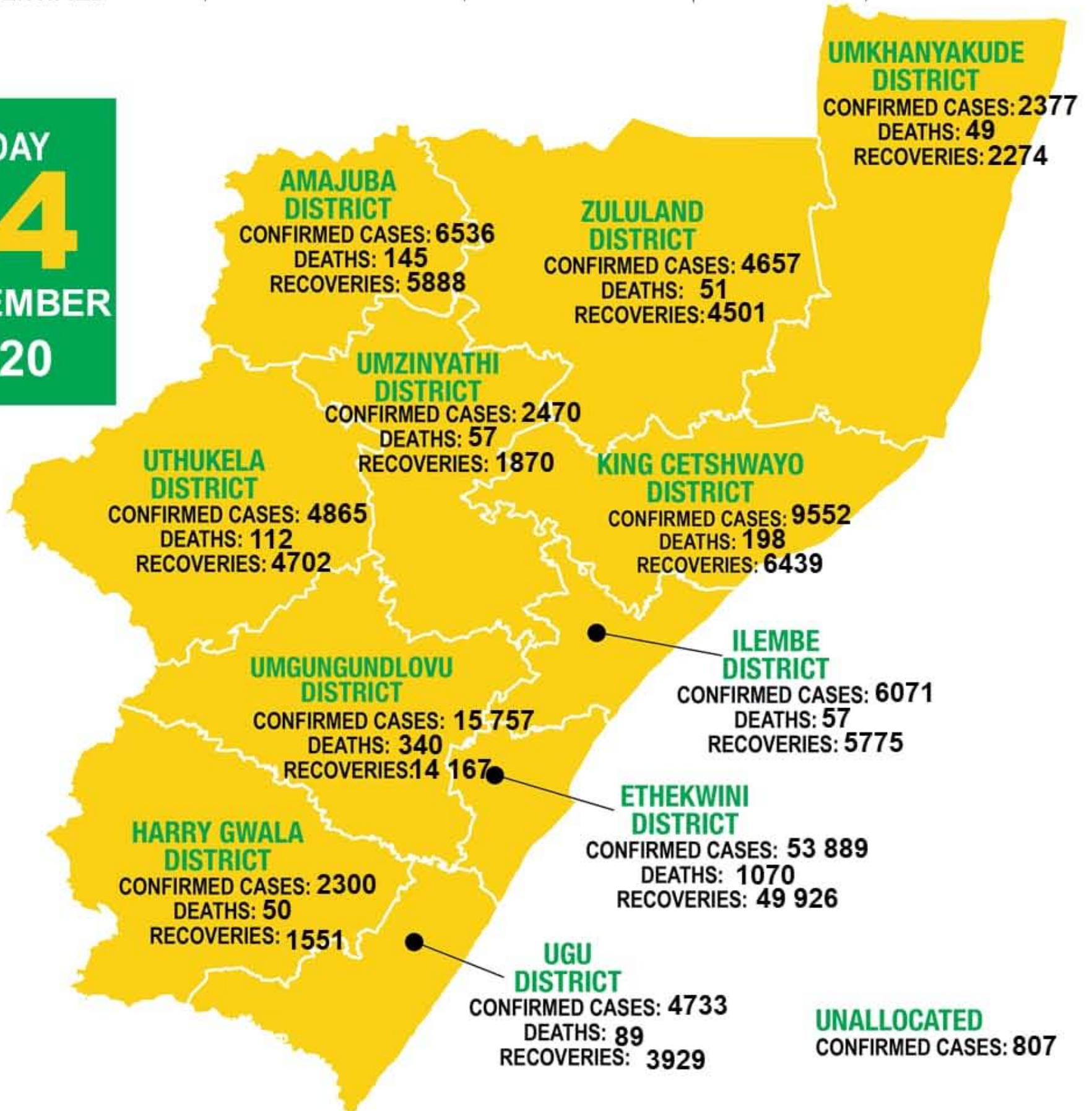


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COVID-19 STATISTICS IN **KZN**

				
114 034	10 784	101034	2218	372
POSITIVE CASES IDENTIFIED	ACTIVE CASES	RECOVERIES	DEATHS	NEW CASES

FRIDAY
04
SEPTEMBER
2020



Learn more to Be READY for #COVID19:
www.sacoronavirus.co.za

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

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SA'S COVID-19 CONTACT TRACKING APP ANNOUNCED

National Minister of Health Dr Zweli Mkhize recently announced the launch of the country's coronavirus tracking mobile application, COVID Alert SA.

What is it?

The South African government's official Bluetooth contact-tracing app. Manual contact tracing is a time-consuming, process that has its limits. The person who tests positive for COVID-19 needs to remember all the people they have been in close contact with for the past two weeks and their contact details, which is not possible for people they come into contact with in public places such as at the grocery store or on public transport.

The COVID Alert SA app uses Bluetooth contact-tracing technology to let people know if they have been in contact with someone who has COVID-19. It gives everyone the chance to understand their exposure to the virus, so that we can protect every member of the community, especially those most at risk.

Applying Bluetooth signals to slowing the spread of COVID-19 has shown promise the world over. The more that South African smartphone users enable in the COVID Alert SA app, the faster we will progress to overcoming the pandemic.

Who can use it?

Anyone in South Africa who has a Bluetooth-enabled smartphone can access this app by downloading it from the Apple App Store or Google Play. Downloading the app is quick and easy – it's under 3 MB in size.

How much is it?

The app is free and does not feature in-app purchases. You will also not have to pay for mobile data when you use the app – the data to use the app has been zero-rated by all of South Africa's mobile network providers.



COVID Alert South Africa

Department of Health - South Africa



COVID-19 ENS

4,6★

56 reviews



2,1 MB

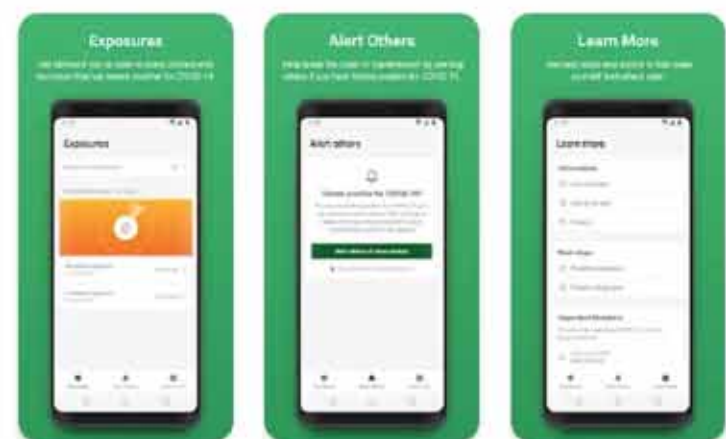
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Rated for 3+

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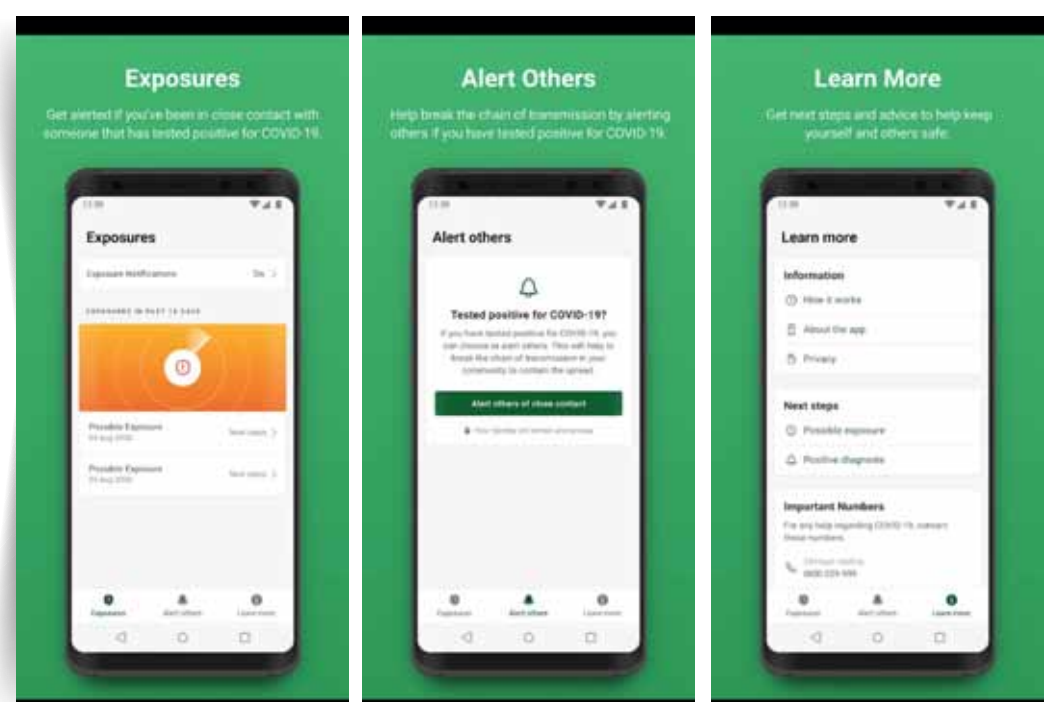


Get an alert if you're exposed to someone who has reported having COVID-19. This app is authorised by South Africa and uses the Exposure Notifications System from Apple and Google.



About this app

Stay Safe and protect others. Get notified of COVID-19



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LET US ALL CHAMPION RESPONSIBLE SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND MAKE SPRING A HEALTHY SEASON IN KZN

Spring is a beautiful season which brings a shift from the bitter cold winter days to now sun drenched warmer days and bright surroundings with blooming fresh flowers.

The benefit of this season to us during this time is that we will be receiving more Vitamin D. This period still calls for a responsible Social Behavior in order to beat COVID-19. We need to continue to take

consistent precautions in order to protect one another and the people we care about from this virus.

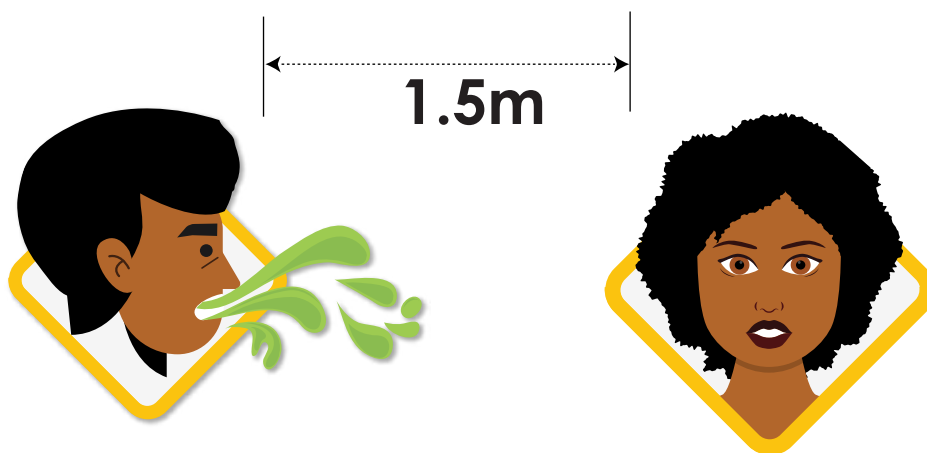
Protective Measures

There are basic protective measures we all need to uncompromisingly practise, and they are:



Wearing of cloth masks in public.

Wear clean and fresh masks which cover our noses and mouths.



Keeping a social distance

No happy hugs, no kisses no shaking of hands



Regular washing of hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub sanitiser.

Keep hands clean, cut nails and avoid touching dirty surfaces, hair, face and picking our noses

This continues to be our new normal as we change seasons and lockdown levels. Behavioural change has the power to minimise new infections and save us from getting a second wave.

A Second Wave means that after the 'surge' and 'peak' we have already seen, and as the numbers of new cases

come down, there is a risk of seeing another surge and peak, and this is because there are still many people who are not immune to Covid-19 infection.

During this season people with allergies suffer more because of the change in weather and environment. Allergens begin to roam freely causing common colds and flu – like symptoms. There are some health issues

that are brought about this beautiful season.

Allergens are common cold and flu caused by several viruses

Chest Infections Headaches

It is truly in our hands to minimize the risk of getting these infections and we can succeed in this if we stay alert, become cautious and abide by the prescribed

protocols of level 2. We can still be able to enjoy a healthy spring without endangering ourselves if we all champion the practice of responsible social behaviour.

Observe all safety measures and make Spring a healthy Season in KZN.

It's In Our Hands.

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KZN HEALTH HOSTS ITS FIRST EVER LGBQTI WEBINAR

KZN Department of Health hosted its first ever webinar targeting mainly the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, Transgender and Intersex (LGBQTI) community early this week.

MEC Ms Nomagugu Simelane-Zulu said that the webinar was an alternative to the original plans of an event similar to one held last year under the programme "Fabulous about Health", which also attracted TV sensation Khaya Dladla.

Addressing the importance of such discussions, MEC Simelane-Zulu said, "National Health Insurance (NHI) is about universal healthcare coverage. If we're talking about universal healthcare without including LGBQTI people we are fooling ourselves."

One of the speakers, Dr Jean-Re Jones, a transgender woman and medical doctor, briefly shared her journey and educated attendees on various issues affecting the LGBQTI community such as the importance of cervical screening for transgender men and prostate cancer screening for transgender women as well as sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

She and other speakers unanimously also called on health care workers to practice sensitivity when dealing with this community.

MEC Simelane-Zulu said, "I do agree that healthcare workers don't treat LGBQTI people in the right manner so we decided to engage in an educational program for healthcare workers, that (as public servants) we're not doing people a favour by doing our jobs and it's not for healthcare workers to judge or decide whether or not they think some patients deserve treatment or not despite religious, traditional or cultural beliefs.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 arrived at the beginning of the year and our plans were interrupted. However, we will continue to have these engagements. This is just the first of many."

LGBTQI TERMS YOU SHOULD KNOW BY DR J JONES

Sexual orientation:
who you are intimately attracted to, emotionally, physically and sexually:

Attraction to same sex:
homosexual: gay/lesbian

Attraction to opposite sex:
heterosexual/ straight

Attraction to both sexes:
bisexual

Refusal to fit in any of the above:
queer

Not sexually attracted to people:
asexual

Both male and female sex-organs/ genitalia:
intersex

Sex:
Biological sex according to a person's genetic make-up and its phenotypic expression.

Male vs. Female:
"Sex assigned at birth"

Gender-identity:
A person's internal sense of self; as male, female, both or neither. It can differ from the sex, as based on external genitalia.

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NEW HIV TREATMENT WIDELY ACCEPTED IN KWAZULU-NATAL



The new HIV antiretroviral treatment, Tenofovir, Lamivudine, and Dolutegravir (TLD) has gradually been widely accepted by HIV positive patients in KwaZulu-Natal on its rollout and initiation.

Public awareness campaigns by the department in promoting the use of TLD since the treatment's rollout last year in December has been instrumental in the increase of patients' initiation use.

TLD is a new ART regimen, with a combination of three drugs which was introduced to fight the HIV virus with one pill.

The new drug has been found to have the following benefits:

- It is well tolerated
- It has superior efficacy and faster rate of viral suppression
- It has a high genetic barrier to resistance
- There is no drug interaction with contraceptives
- Side effects are mild and uncommon

Because of the above benefits the Department of Health has resorted to switching all patients that are illegible to this drug.

If you want to be initiated on this TLD regimen, contact your nearest clinic, nurses will be able to provide you with all the information and initiate you on the regimen if you are eligible.

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HPV VACCINATION CAMPAIGN 2ND ROUND POSTPONED TO 2021

The Covid-19 pandemic has abruptly disrupted 1st round of the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccination campaign in February/Mar 2020 and now the 2nd round which was meant to take place in August/September has been postponed to next year (2021).

HPV Vaccine is an immunization given to prevent Cervical Cancer and is targeted at Grade 5 girl learners 9 years and older, in Public Schools and girl learners 9 years going to 10 years, in Special Schools.

The HPV vaccination campaign takes place twice a year over a period of four to six weeks, based on the dates agreed upon by the

National Department of Health (NDoH) and Department of Basic Education (DBE).

During the 1st round in February/March, some of KZN's public schools were not visited due to the outbreak of the virus and location of first case in the province. The campaign was conducted from the 11th February to 20th March 2020; however, the interruption of early school closure on the 18th due to the global outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic forced the campaign to come to a halt. Some schools could not be visited and therefore some eligible girls could not be vaccinated.

Although Grade Five (5) girl learners were immunized last year(2019) when they were in Grade Four (4), some girls that were still under 9 years were not vaccinated, due to the disruption.

HPV 1st ROUND ACHIEVEMENTS IN FEBRUARY/MARCH 2020

- 3 731 out of 8 188 (46%) Grade five (5) girl learners aged 9 years and above were vaccinated for HPV. Furthermore, majority of girls were immunised while in grade 4 in 2019
- 3 667 out of 4 093 (90%) Schools with grade five (5) girls were vaccinated for HPV .

Plans to provide immunisation to all unimmunised eligible grade 5 learners during the 2nd round of the campaign 11 August to 18 September 2020; have now been differed to February/March 2021.

DURING ROUND 1 OF THE HPV VACCINE CAMPAIGN FEBRUARY/MARCH 2021, THE FOLLOWING GIRL LEARNERS WOULD BE VACCINATED:

- All eligible grade 5 girl learners 9 years and older (Grade 5 in 2021) would receive 1st dose of the vaccine
- Grade 6 Girl learners (2021) who received their 1st dose in August/September 2018 (when they were in grade 4) and those (girl learners who are in Grade 5 in 2020) who received their first dose in Feb/March 2020, would receive their 2nd dose of the vaccine.

The targeted group of girl learners are Grade 5 but due to the COVID 19 Pandemic and deferment of the campaign, grade 6 girl learners will be vaccinated next year (2021).

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KZN HEALTH MEC ISSUES INSTRUCTION FOR STRICTER VETTING OF INTERNS AT HEALTHCARE FACILITIES:

QUALIFICATIONS OF ALL OTHER STAFFERS ARE ALSO BEING VERIFIED



KWAZULU-Natal Health MEC Ms Nomagugu Simelane-Zulu wants healthcare facilities to be stricter when screening and verifying the credentials of medical interns and allied health students for experiential training.

This follows two recent security breaches by people allegedly posing as medical interns. In the latest incident, MEC Simelane-Zulu has commended the acting CEO of Nkonjeni Hospital, in Zululand District, for proactively alerting the

authorities about the antics of a man who had posed as medical student, which led to his arrest on Monday.

It is alleged that the man had pretended to be a medical student in his fifth year of study, with the intention of conducting his elective module of family medicine at Nkonjeni Hospital. After allegedly producing his student card, followed by telephonic confirmation of his credentials by an alleged professor, the young man was reportedly allowed to shadow a senior doctor at the hospital.

According to hospital management, he never worked without supervision,

and was also not allowed to prescribe medication. The 24 year-old man, who has been charged with fraud, was arrested after police received a complaint about his alleged disappearance with a sum of R40 000 that he had borrowed from various Nkonjeni Hospital staffers.

However, he has not yet appeared in court due to an ongoing investigation. According to the SAPS, he is believed to have committed similar crimes in Gauteng. In July 2020, media reports emerged about a young woman who had allegedly posed as a Wits University medical student, and reportedly had access to three healthcare facilities at various times. The matter is currently under investigation. Commenting on the latest developments, MEC Simelane-Zulu said she had written to all health district directors to direct all health institutions to immediately stop the direct intake of students.

In line with the new protocols, healthcare facilities across the province will now only allow students in through head office. The MEC has also issued a directive to the Department's Human Resources Management unit to intensify and strengthen an already ongoing process to verify the credentials of all departmental staff.

MEC Simelane-Zulu said: "Firstly, we wish to thank the acting CEO of Nkonjeni Dr Ndumiso Xhakaza and his team for their vigilance, and swift actions when they picked up abnormalities with this person, which is what actually led to his arrest.

In fact, Dr Xhakaza is himself a potential victim here, due to an indication that the perpetrator also tried to impersonate him. "We're obviously concerned by these incidents. That is why, even after the first incident, we started reviewing our own internal processes that are followed when admitting these students.

We realise that, in a quest to make the process easier and not too bureaucratic for students who need to do their practicals during the holidays, our systems might have had loopholes, which criminals have evidently tried to exploit. We are now changing our systems so that they are watertight. We cannot, under any circumstances, allow any unqualified person to have access to our patients.

"We have agreed that, from now on, students who need to do their practicals will have to follow a rigorous authentication and verification process so that, at all times, we deal with genuine people."

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THE POWER OF GRATITUDE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS. STOP TO SMELL THE ROSES.



Life has inevitably slowed down for most of us during Lockdown and it has given us a chance to reflect.

There are always things to be grateful for (even now), and gratitude reminds us how special, beautiful and fortunate our lives are, even under the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Gratitude is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness, it helps people feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships.

“Tapping into positive thinking can help you solve problems and be more creative, strengthen your immune system and build resilience” said Dr John Sally, McCord Hospital.

Therefore, it is of great importance to focus on the positive side for your health benefit. We are fortunate that there are researchers who have devoted their lives to preventing and addressing pandemics like this one.

Healthcare workers and hospital staff are also providing compassionate and collaborative care. Our educators too are showing innovation and persistence to make sure learning doesn't stop.

The pandemic has a silver lining - it has given us the possibility of shifting our mindset and behaviour. We have seen how our planet can thrive in our absence and therefore it might encourage us all to live more consciously and take better care of ourselves and the planet.

One of the most powerful tools for staying optimistic is gratitude. Here are five suggestions for getting started suggested by Dr Sally:

1. Give yourself some grace.
2. Keep it simple
3. Show some love to our front line heroes.
4. Tell your loved ones how you feel, at home or through video chat.
5. Take good care of yourself. Eat well, exercise and try to get quality sleep.

Remember, life will return to normal, even if it's a new kind of normal. Practicing gratitude can help you cope and boost your peace of mind.

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KZN HEALTH IN PICTURES

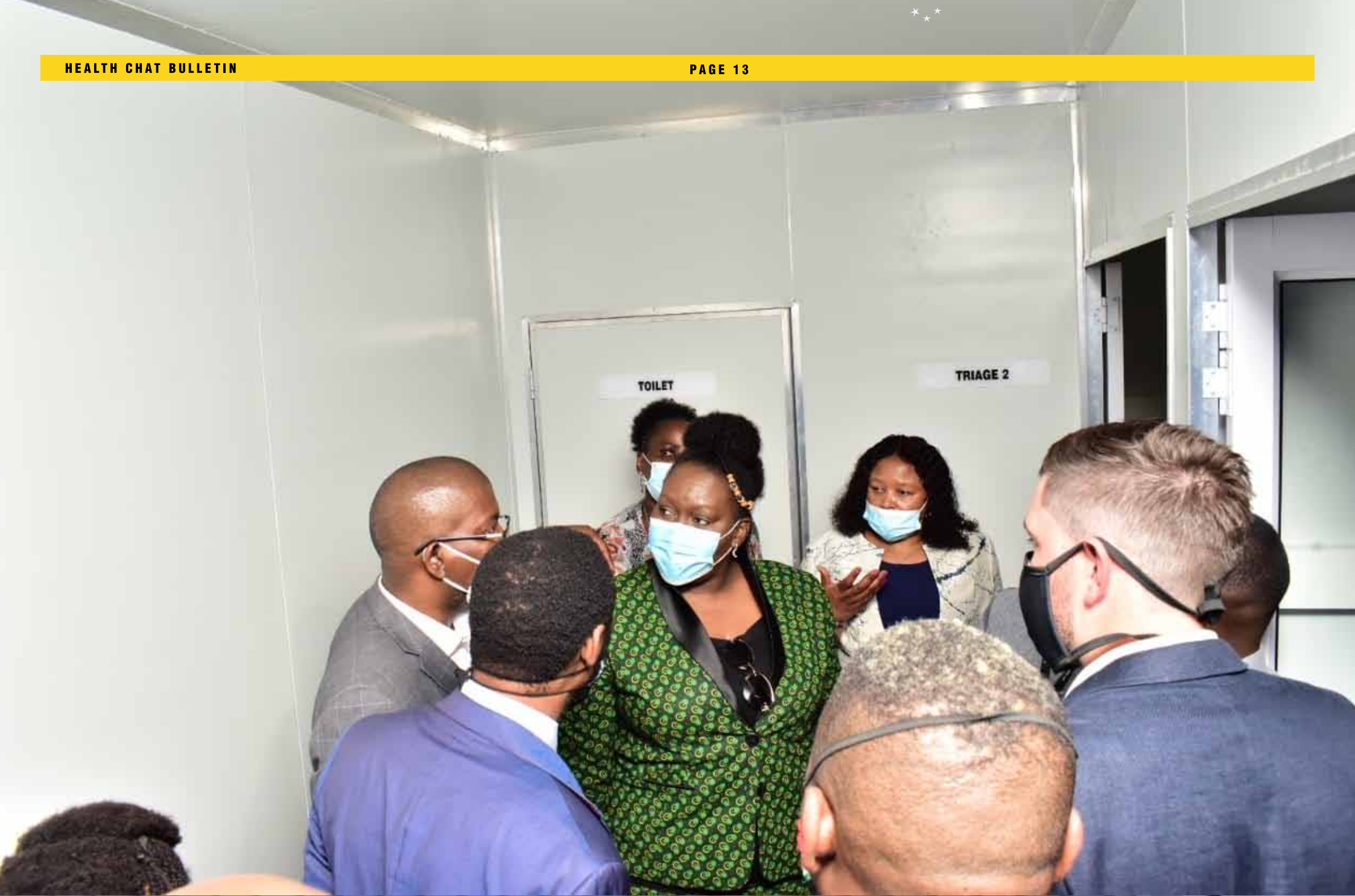
KZN Health MEC Ms Nomagugu Simelane-Zulu and KZN Public Works MEC Ms Peggy Nkonyeni launched yet another brand new COVID-19 field hospital at General Justice Gizenga Mpanza Regional Hospital last week



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