

# HEALTH MATTERS **FREE** Ezempilo

EDUCATE || INFORM || EMPOWER

DECEMBER • 2014



## KNOW YOUR HIV STATUS

*It makes all the difference!*

Patient rights ● Emergency help ● New ARV policy



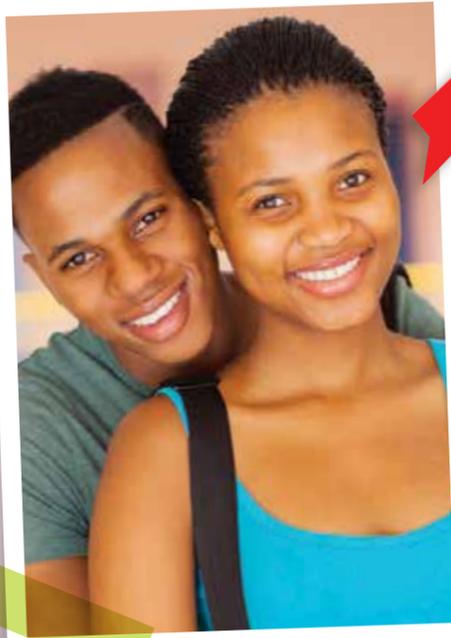
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# THERE CAN BE NO DISCRIMINATION AGAINST ANYONE WITH HIV OR AIDS.



- They have the right to medical treatment and care from our health and welfare services.
- Children with HIV are allowed to attend any school.
- No one can be fired from a job just because they are HIV positive
- No one can be forced to have an HIV test at work or before getting a job.
- Test results cannot be shown to anyone else without permission.
- Pregnant women with HIV have the right to make a choice about their pregnancy.

**HELP US TURN THE TIDE ON HIV AND AIDS. REMOVE THE STIGMA, KNOW THE FACTS.**



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## Message from...

**KZN Health MEC,  
Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo**



**IT'S THAT TIME** of the year again, when KwaZulu-Natal will roll out the red carpet to welcome thousands of holidaymakers to our shores for the December holidays. While this is a welcome boost to the economy in the province, the truth is that with an increase in the number of visitors comes the unintended consequence of higher traffic volumes, which often leads to a higher number of road accidents. These accidents, which claim many lives, cause pain and leave people injured or maimed, are unnecessary and certainly avoidable. All we need to do is act a little more responsibly.

**THE TIME HAS COME** for all road users to exercise caution and stay on the right side of the law by doing the simple things, such as not drinking and driving and always ensuring that their vehicles are not overloaded and are roadworthy. Reckless behaviour on the roads is costly because it creates an unnecessary burden on the healthcare system, whose resources would be much better utilised for unforeseen and unavoidable situations. Remember, breaking this cycle of irresponsible behaviour starts with you.

**THE MONTH OF DECEMBER** also contains one of the most important days in the health calendar: World AIDS Day, which we commemorated on 1 December. This is a time for reflection. It is an opportunity for all of us to stand together and unite in the fight against HIV. The theme for World AIDS Day 2014 puts us course to achieving this. The theme is: "I can't change my HIV status, but you can change your attitude. Zero Stigma, Zero Discrimination."

**INDEED, WE NEED** to take this to heart by remembering and honouring those who lost their lives due to the epidemic. Their deaths must not

be in vain. We all have a duty to create as much awareness about the prevention and management of HIV/Aids as possible. In keeping with the theme, we must ensure everyone, especially young people, knows about HIV/Aids and its impact. We must ensure that everyone knows how it can be avoided and that no one must fall victim to prejudice, stigma or discrimination because of their HIV status. This should not just be applicable on World Aids Day, but throughout the year and every year.

**I ALSO WISH** to take this opportunity to thank every healthcare worker who has sacrificed their time and effort to ensure the best access to healthcare for our people. I wish to register my hurt and disappointment about the murder of a nurse from KwaDabeka Community Healthcare Centre, who was killed shortly after finishing her shift. Our society should have no place for criminals who threaten and take the lives of people whose job is to save lives. I hope and pray that the perpetrator(s) will be caught and made to pay for their cold-blooded act. I also wish to take this opportunity and thank all those healthcare workers who will be on duty during the holidays, especially Christmas Day and New Year's Day. Your willingness to go the extra mile does not go unnoticed. You are all true patriots and valuable assets to our country and we appreciate you.

**TO ALL THE PEOPLE** of KwaZulu-Natal, I wish to convey my best wishes and compliments for the New Year. Remember to go to your nearest healthcare facility to get your free health examination, because it is easier and cheaper to treat and manage any disease when it is found early, rather than too late. Merry Christmas and Happy 2015.

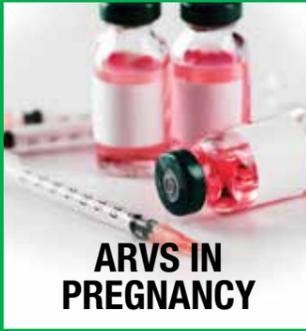
Stay blessed!



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ARVS IN PREGNANCY



EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES



PATIENT RIGHTS

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Your suggestions and comments are welcome, and if you have been impressed by a health worker who provided an outstanding service, let us know and we will feature them!  
**CONTACT US** on 031 562 9803, write to us on PO Box 25439, Gateway 4321 or email editor@ezempilohealthmatters.co.za

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**THIS HOLIDAY, STAY ALIVE! DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE!**



**Good friends don't let good friends drink and drive!**

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# Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in December

*Be prepared. Know who to call*



The Department of Health in KwaZulu-Natal has received lots of calls from members of the public regarding calls for ambulances and other emergency medical services. To ensure you know how it works, keep the following useful guide handy and make sure everyone in your family knows what to do in an emergency:

**Make sure emergency crew can find you**

It's normal to be afraid and panic during an emergency situation. But it's important to remain calm and give the emergency service the correct information they need to get to you as quickly as possible. When calling for an ambulance you will need to tell them:

- **WHO YOU ARE** A contact number (in case they need to call you back)
- **YOUR EXACT LOCATION** Street address, town and suburb. Try to include a landmark, a building or school or something close to your location to help them find you.
- Send someone out into the street to wait for and direct the ambulance.

**Giving information to emergency services**

The operator will ask you questions about the incident so that they know what kind of emergency help you need. Don't put the phone down but answer the questions and stay on the phone until they tell you to put it down.

**Know who to expect**

The ambulance will send one or two paramedics to you and they will first assess the situation before responding to the patient. They will bring the equipment with them so please give them the space they need but feel free to ask them questions - remember a paramedic **MUST** have your permission before giving your child an injection.

**USING A CELL PHONE**

If you have access to a cell phone and need emergency medical services,

**DIAL 112**

**REMEMBER!** The call goes to the national Emergency Control Centre of the cellphone operator (mostly in Gauteng). It is then re-directed to the EMS Centre where the call came from.

If you dial 10177 on a cell phone, the call is automatically directed to the 112 Emergency Call Centre before being rerouted to your nearest Emergency Management Centre for assistance.

**10177 IS FREE AND CAN BE USED ANYWHERE IN SOUTH AFRICA.**

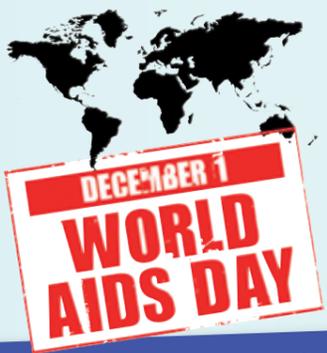


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# WORLD AIDS DAY

## Not at risk of HIV? Think again.

**Most young people aged 15 and over believe they are not at risk of getting HIV. But did you know that one in 10 teenagers is already infected with HIV and doesn't even know it?**

In fact, the risk of a teenage female getting HIV is more than four times higher than a male – and they make up more than 40% of new infections in the country. Some of the reasons for this include teenage pregnancy and the fact that female teenagers are scared to refuse to have sex or to have sex without a condom, like Zama who gave up her studies to become a teenage mother.



“I was a student and met an older guy who used to take the same taxi as me every day. He worked in the city and always dressed smart. We started dating and after one month he wanted to have sex with me. I said no but he kept saying that he wanted to marry me and if I really loved him I would have sex with him. He convinced me that since we were going to get married there was no need for a condom. At the time I thought it made sense and I didn't even think he may have other girlfriends. We had sex without protection and after a few months I fell pregnant. I discovered he had HIV and had passed it on to me. I was very upset because as soon as I told him I was pregnant he said he didn't want to marry me and left me. I went to the clinic as soon as I found out about my pregnancy, they treated me to make sure that my baby is not born HIV positive. But I really hope other young girls learn from this. I want to say to them 'don't give up your studies or your body for a man until you are married and make sure he has no other partners. Practice safe sex. It's the only way you can be sure you are protecting yourself from getting a sexual disease,' explains Zama.

## Don't make the same mistake. Say **NO** to sex without condoms!

Use the following quick guide to help reduce your risk of HIV:

### ALWAYS use condoms – and use correctly!

Condoms are highly effective in reducing the risk of spreading HIV. **REMEMBER** it doesn't stop HIV, but reduces the risk of spreading it, so insist on using a condom!

### Get tested

If you are sexually active, get tested at least once a year and if your partner is HIV positive, encourage him to get treatment as well and to stay on it.

### One partner

The number of sex partners you have affects your HIV risk. The more partners you have, the more likely you are to contract a sexually transmitted disease. If your partner is sexually active, insist on a condom and regular HIV testing.

### Circumcision

Male medical circumcision reduces the risk of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. What's more, it's safe, free and effective when carried out by a trained medical expert!

**TIP**  
The Department of Health has a Centre of Excellence to medically train health workers and traditional healers on circumcision. Always make sure that the person you use for your circumcision has received training to carry out the procedure.



### Post exposure prophylaxis (PEP)

These are ARV's that are given in certain circumstances to people who are exposed to the HIV virus in certain situations, such as rape or working in an environment which exposes them to HIV. If you do find yourself in this situation, remember to:

- Go to a hospital as soon as possible (within 72 hours)
- Make sure you receive counselling and HIV testing
- If HIV tests are negative, your ARV-PEP will be given for 28 days, followed up with HIV tests at 6, 12 and 24 weeks.

### RISKY SEX

The risk of getting HIV through sex depends a lot on the kind of sex. Use the guide below to educate yourself and friends too:

#### ORAL SEX

**RISK LOW, NOT ZERO!**

The risk of getting HIV through oral sex is low but it is not zero risk. Women are more at risk if they are performing oral sex on a man who is HIV positive as his body fluids or semen may contain the virus which then enters her body through her mouth.

**REMEMBER!** Performing oral sex puts you at risk of getting other STIs, including herpes.

#### VAGINAL SEX (penis in the vagina)

**RISK HIGH**

In women, HIV can pass directly through the thin layers of skin around their private parts. The outer lining can sometimes tear which allows HIV to enter the body. The risk of HIV infection increases if you or your partner also has an STI.

**TIP** You can lower your risk of getting HIV and other STIs by always using a condom!

#### ANAL SEX

**RISK HIGHEST**

The risk of getting HIV from receiving anal sex without a condom is higher than any other because this practice allows HIV to enter the body directly. The person receiving anal sex is at greater risk of getting HIV than the person performing anal sex.

**REMEMBER!** HIV can be found in the blood or semen so having your partner withdraw before he ejaculates may not reduce your risk.



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More people living longer lives than ever before

# NEW BOOST FOR HIV+ PREGNANT WOMEN

**WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**  
The most important thing to do once you discover you are pregnant is to access your health service in your area. That means, letting your clinic know you are pregnant - within the first three months and never missing an appointment. "Pregnant women must report to their clinic within three months to ensure they are properly assessed and put onto treatment if they are HIV positive. That way they are giving their baby the best chance of being born without the virus," says KZN Health MEC, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo.

## 'Lifelong treatment regardless of CD4 count' says Health Minister

National Health Minister, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi has announced that from next month, every HIV positive pregnant woman will be offered life long ARV treatment regardless of their CD4 count.



### What does it mean?

Until now, all HIV positive pregnant women were offered ARV treatment but only while breastfeeding. Once they stopped breastfeeding and their CD count went up to 350 or more, ARV treatment was stopped. Under the new policy which will start next month, all pregnant women who are HIV positive will be offered lifelong treatment of ARV - giving her lifetime protection!

number of pregnant women dying has been reduced and the number of babies born with HIV has come down to less than 3%. With lifelong treatment, we will be able to save more mothers and babies and build an AIDS free society in our lifetime! It also means we will be able, as a country, to meet Millennium Development Goals (MDG) of providing universal access for all HIV positive people in our country. The MDG is a set of eight goals with targets and deadlines which leaders of 189 countries - including South Africa, signed in 2000 to improve the lives of the world's poorest people.

### How will it affect you?

Since government began its roll out of ARV treatment to pregnant women, the

**BOOK YOUR PREGNANCY TEST EARLY TO MAKE SURE YOU AND YOUR BABY HAVE THE BEST CHANCE OF LIVING LONGER, HEALTHIER LIVES.**

# KZN HEALTH



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# NEWS

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## NEW PROGRAM BRINGS HOPE FOR PROSTHETICS

**PEOPLE WHO HAVE LOST** their limbs often have to wait for more than a year to have artificial limbs – known as prosthetics – fitted. Thanks to a ground breaking training program involving the Department of Health in KwaZulu-Natal and the Durban University of Technology (DUT), KZN will now be able to produce more specialists to manufacture these devices.

"These assistive devices bring much-needed dignity, self-reliance, independence and economic viability to our people who are not able-bodied. Through this partnership we can now say that the scarcity of

orthotics-prosthetics professionals is a thing of the past," said KZN Health MEC, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo.

The four year program at Wentworth Hospital is only the second such program in the country, following Tshwane University of Technology which offers medical orthotics and prosthetics as a course.

KZN Department of Health will offer 30 bursaries to selected students each year to study towards a Bachelor of Health Sciences in Medical Orthotics and Prosthetics.

## Mobile hospital reaches far rural areas

**A STATE OF THE ART MOBILE HOSPITAL** which offers essential primary health care to communities who do not have access to health care was launched recently - bringing excitement and hope, thanks to the innovative approach of the Department of Health in partnership with the private sector.

The much needed mobile hospital - a first of many to come, will be stationed in Molweni for three weeks during which time it will offer TB and HIV testing, Blood and Sugar testing, X ray screening, dental care and many other services which patients would normally have to travel long distances to access from other health facilities.

The mobile hospital will serve communities from Lower Molweni, Nogxaza and Madumeni and comes with qualified personnel and 3 consulting rooms to ensure privacy. In addition, a separate truck is also attached to the mobile facility with another four consulting rooms consisting of a Diathermy machine and other equipment to carry out Medical Male Circumcision (MMC) procedures.



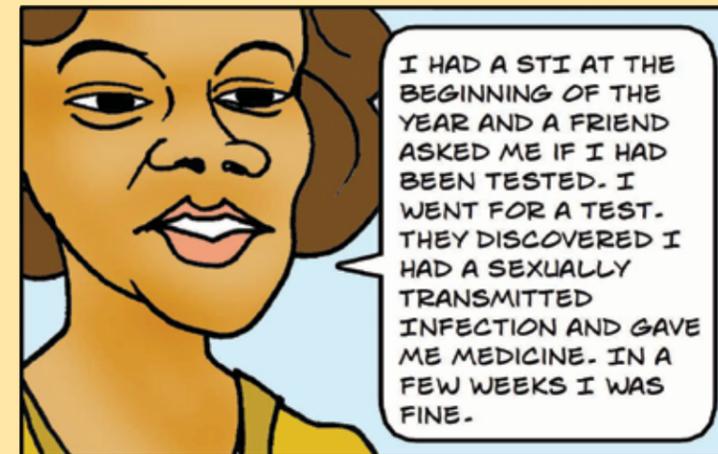
## Medical students head for Cuba

**PARENTS AND STUDENTS** were overcome with emotion last month as the students said their final goodbyes before leaving South Africa to study medicine in Cuba, thanks to a Cuban-South African health partnership program.

Addressing the ninety-six students during a farewell function, MEC Dhlomo called on them to work hard, behave well and be good ambassadors for South Africa. The medical students will spend three years studying in Cuba before returning as qualified doctors to work in their communities in South Africa. "The opportunity you've been given is unique and it is for you and you alone. Many others would have liked to be in your shoes. You need to persevere in the first three years because the load is enormous. This journey is like running a marathon. You need to have strong mental ability and tell yourself that the one beside you is equally tired but is still persevering," said Dhlomo.



# WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTION



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**DISABILITY AWARENESS MONTH**

# Protecting the Human Rights of people with Disabilities

There are nearly 3 million South Africans living with a disability

**P**hindi is 22 and lives with her mother in a rural area. She was left partially disabled as a result of a childhood disease so cannot walk properly. Most of her family and friends shun her because they are embarrassed to be seen with her, so Phindi spends a lot of her time alone. It's a story that's often told by many people living with a disability in our country.

### Disabled doesn't mean unable!

Phindi has finished her school and she can read and write. She also went for basic computer training as she wanted to find an office job in the city. "I have to drag my feet a bit when I walk because of my disability but people look at me and think I'm stupid. Many people ask me why I am not kept in a hospital and even when I apply for a job and I say I have a problem with my legs but I can walk they tell me they can't employ me because I am disabled which is wrong but what can I do?" she says.

### Removing the prejudice

During this month, it's time for each one of us to look at how we treat a person with a disability. Is that all we see? The reality is that a disabled person can live a productive life, and can contribute to the workforce. Whether it is at school, work



### GRANTS

People with disabilities can access a disability grant. This covers the basic needs of disabled adults over 18 years who are unfit to work due to a mental or physical disability.

The grant is for people who are not able to work and who have not refused treatment. The disability must be confirmed by a valid medical report of a medical officer, stating whether the disability is temporary or permanent. Those who fit this description can visit their nearest social security office or speak to your local clinic for assistance.

or home, it's time for us to work together to remove the prejudice around people with disabilities. Encourage those in your community to include people with disabilities around community gatherings and social events. Do your bit to break the barriers of prejudice that divide us and remember people with disabilities have the following rights:

- The right not to be discriminated against
- The right to self-representation
- Access health and rehabilitation
- Access to education
- Access to housing
- Access to transport

**REMEMBER! HAVING A DISABILITY DOES NOT MEAN YOU CANNOT DO WHAT AN ABLED PERSON CAN DO – IT SIMPLY MEANS YOU DO IT DIFFERENTLY!**



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# WORLD PATIENT SAFETY DAY



## What are your rights as a patient?

Millions of people visit our health facilities every day and despite the limited resources, the Health Department tries its best to ensure more people than ever before are receiving health care.

As a country proud of our freedoms and human rights enshrined in the constitution over the past 20 years, we must also ask the question, what are our responsibilities regarding those rights? Do patients have the right to demand immediate attention whilst someone more critical is being attended to? Do health workers have the right to shout at patients in their care? To understand this, the Department of Health drew up a Patients' Rights Charter so that both the health worker and the patient understand what's expected of them.

### As a South African, you have the right to:

#### A HEALTHY AND SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Everyone has the right to a healthy and safe environment that will ensure their physical and mental health or well-being, including adequate water supply, sanitation and waste disposal as well as protection from all forms of environmental danger, such as pollution, ecological degradation or infection.

#### PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING

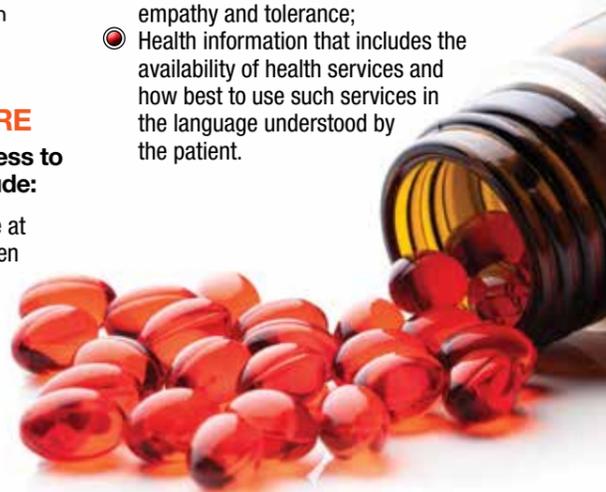
Every citizen has the right to participate in the development of health policies and everyone has the right to participate in decision-making on matters affecting one's health

#### ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

Everyone has the right of access to health care services that include:

- Receiving timely emergency care at any health care facility that is open regardless of one's ability to pay;
- Treatment and rehabilitation that must be made known to the patient to allow patient to understand such treatment and the consequences;

- Provision for special needs in the case of newborn infants, children, pregnant women, the aged, disabled persons, patients in pain, persons living with HIV or AIDS patients.
- Counselling without discrimination, coercion or violence on matters such as reproductive health, cancer or HIV/AIDS;
- Palliative care that is affordable and effective in cases of incurable or terminal illness;
- A positive disposition displayed by health care providers that demonstrate courtesy, human dignity, patience, empathy and tolerance;
- Health information that includes the availability of health services and how best to use such services in the language understood by the patient.



Everyone has the right to be given full and accurate information about the nature of their illnesses

#### CHOICE OF HEALTH SERVICES

Everyone has the right to choose a particular health care provider for services or a particular health facility for treatment as long as the choice of facilities is in line with prescribed service delivery guide lines.

#### BE TREATED BY A NAMED HEALTH CARE PROVIDER

Everyone has the right to know the person that is providing health care and must be attended to by clearly identified health care providers.

#### INFORMED CONSENT

Everyone has the right to be given full and accurate information about the nature of their illnesses, diagnostic procedures,

the proposed treatment and the costs involved, for one to make a decision that affects any one of these elements.

#### CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

Information concerning one's health, including information concerning treatment may only be disclosed with informed consent, except when required in terms of any law or an order of the court.

#### REFUSAL OF TREATMENT

A person may refuse treatment and such refusal shall be verbal or in writing as long as such refusal does not endanger the health of others.

#### CONTINUITY OF CARE

No one shall be abandoned by a health care professional worker or a health facility who initially took responsibility for one's health.

#### BE REFERRED FOR A SECOND OPINION

Everyone has the right to be referred for a second opinion on request to a health provider of one's choice.

#### COMPLAIN ABOUT HEALTH SERVICES

Everyone has the right to complain about health care services and to have such complaints investigated and to receive a full response on such investigation.

### And with these rights, come these responsibilities as a patient:

#### Every patient must:

- Advise health care providers of his wishes regard his death.
- Comply with the prescribed treatment or rehabilitation procedures.
- Ask about any related costs of treatment and to arrange for payment where necessary.
- Take care of health records in his possession.
- Take care of his health.
- Care for and protect the environment.
- Respect the rights of other patients and health providers.
- Utilise the health care system properly and not abuse it.
- Know his or her local health services and what they offer. t
- Provide health care providers with the relevant and accurate information for diagnostic, treatment, rehabilitation or counselling purposes.



Everyone has the right to a healthy and safe environment that will ensure their physical and mental health



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## Prevention of Injuries Month

*Did you know Injuries from burns are four times higher in South Africa than any other industrialised country in the world?*

While we focus on how to avoid injuries during this month's theme, we should also be aware of the serious effects of burns. More than 80% of serious burns happen in mainly informal settlements and we can change this, with simple prevention. This includes making sure that children do not get close to a burning stove or fire or burning candle. The highest number of deaths from burns is mainly in the 0-14 year age group, while people with the highest injuries are mainly over 55 years. Speak to your local clinic or council about safer cooking methods and they will advise you on how to reduce the risk of fires at home. Teach others in the community and let's save more lives!



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### World Aids Day Closing The Gap

Closing The Gap is the theme for this month's World Aids Day. This means educating, empowering and encouraging people everywhere in our communities to access the services they need. By closing the gap, millions of people who are not even aware of their HIV-positive status can get the support and treatment they need. Closing the gap means that the goal to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030 is possible!



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### International Day of Persons with Disability

This day is aimed at raising awareness of the rights of people with disabilities. They are often isolated in society and today is a reminder that they still have a role and contribution to make, and simply want the chance to prove themselves as productive members of society.

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### International Volunteers Day

This day is recognised around the world as a tribute to those who give their time and skills to care for others freely. Imagine if we all did this in our communities? Lending a helping hand to those in need, sharing and giving freely of what we have. The West calls it volunteering... to us it's simply Ubuntu – let's bring it back!

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### World Patient Safety Day

The World Health Organisation launched this day to ensure that people understand their rights to safety of care in hospitals everywhere. Patients' rights are protected by the constitution and the Patient Health Charter. We must also remember that patients have responsibilities towards their health and the way they treat health workers – it's about tolerance, respect, rights and responsibilities.

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### International Human Rights Day

This day honours the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In South Africa Human Rights Day is celebrated on 21 March in remembrance of the Sharpeville massacre. Take a few minutes to talk to your children about the importance of this day and what they can do to value their rights and freedoms which many South Africans fought and died for.



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