

# JONGGA

ISSUE 26

magazine



Inform



Inspire



Innovate

# THIS ISSUE

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## On the Cover

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# Compliments



Good day

I would like to take the time to express my heartfelt thank you to the staff at CTICC who diligently worked to help me get better. From the security, the kitchen staff, the cleaners, the nurses, sisters, doctors and physio therapist I would not have been able to recover so remarkably quickly.

A special thank you to Dr Jana Wenhold, Physiotherapist Kaitlynn and Sister Dudu Ndlovu and her team for working so hard to help me. I really appreciate it.

**God Bless You!!!**  
**Shireen Sondag**

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I want to dedicate and salute all emergency medical practitioners in private and provincial sectors. They are truly beings who serve above and beyond. In particular, I'd like to recognise Emile Hamilton who is a dedicated Emergency Care Practitioner (ECP). Emile has proven to be a loyal and trustworthy health care practitioner, friend and colleague.

**Well done!**  
**Violet Meissenheimer**

To whom it concern

I would like to express the efficient service received on the day I went for a COVID-19 test. After being tested, the doctor advised me to go into isolation. I went home and within ten minutes the Department of Health called me and I was told I will be picked up and taken to a hotel to isolate. I would like to say thank you for the great concern I received from Retreat Day Hospital nursing staff and doctor.

**Thank you**  
**Percival Milton**

---

Good day

I just want to say thank you for the excellent service from Overberg Ambulance. I am very impressed and thankful to Mr Howard Brikkels and the team that always make sure the Dialysis patients get the best service. At any given time - be it public holidays, bringing the patients earlier or organizing transport for patients to Tygerberg - Mr Brikkels has always come through for us. Thank you for making it easier for us. We appreciate the work you do.

**Sr. Oerson**  
**Dialysis Worcester**

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Hi there,

Sandra Maritz, our communications officer, was instrumental in ensuring that the staff and community of the Cape Winelands District was always informed regarding developments during the COVID 19 pandemic. She was and is undoubtedly the link between the Provincial Communication Directorate, the District Joint Operational Committee, our office, staff, community stakeholders and the broader community. The Cape Winelands District and its staff would like to salute the Communication Directorate, in particular Sandra Maritz, as Communication Heroes.

**Sincerely**  
**Handri Liebenberg**  
**DD: Comprehensive Health Services, Cape Winelands District**



Hi  
 I am an 82-year-old patient and normally collect my chronic medication either at Tygerberg, Karl Bremer Hospitals and the clinics at Reed Street Bellville and Durbanville.  
 Thank you Karl Bremer Hospital for arranging for my monthly chronic medicine to be delivered to my home via The Reed Street Clinic in Bellville. This is much appreciated and I can't thank you all enough. It means such a lot to us elderly and handicapped patients.

**Sincerely,  
 F.J.(Derek) Potgieter**



I would love to take this time to just thank you all.  
 From the amazing roommates, Mrs Amiena Abrahams, Mrs Roode, Mrs Beverley Julius, Ms Colette, Ouma Isaacs, Brenda and Nivaro (please send my love to them), to the cleaners, ladies who brought my meals, the amazing shift staff and nurses from Tygerberg Hospital Neurological Department Ward A4W who had me feeling comfortable, safe and welcome since Monday the 27th of July 2020 till Sunday 2 August 2020.

You are amazing frontline workers and I thank God I was in your care. I will forever be grateful. I am full speed in recovery to be the best mommy I can be to my Katya (who is super happy to have mommy home).

**Sending love and light  
 Simóné Smith**



Geagte Dr Mouton en Hermanus Hospitaal personeel  
 Ek was op 27 Julie 2020 toegelaat met COVID-19 verwante pneumonia. Hiermee wil ek net bitter baie dankie sê vir al die personeel wat my so uitstekend versorg het. Van die eerste aand af wat ek daar gekom het, het ek vyfster behandeling ontvang. Sr Forbes en Dr Perold in ongevallen het hulle uitstekend van hul taak gekwyd, ten spyte van familieledede van 'n pasiënt wat so lelik geskel het in ongevallen.  
 Woorde kan nie regtig beskryf hoe dankbaar ek is vir die ongelooflike en puik diens wat ek gekry het nie.  
 Hou so aan met julle puik en uitstekende diens.

**Elvira Jacobs (Gelderblom)  
 Hermanus CDC**







## Message from Minister

In the past few weeks, we have seen a remarkable drop in the infection rate, this does NOT mean the end of COVID-19. I constantly say, it is our behaviour that will determine how long the virus stays with us.

Let's all practise socially responsible behaviour, and keep in mind that mass gatherings have a potential of being a super spreader, avoid crowded place.

Behaviour change models indicate that we need to change our everyday habitual behaviours if we are going to prevent further spread of the virus, this we can do by:

- Practising social distancing
- Isolating when sick
- Not removing our masks when talking or exercising
- Washing or sanitising our hands regularly
- Avoid touching our mouth, eyes and nose (T-zone)
- Practising cough etiquette and
- Cleaning highly-used surfaces

I have already been to Cape Winelands, Central Karoo, Garden Route, Weskus

and in the Metro where I have been distributing masks and urging citizens to remain careful in observing the essential 5 Golden Rules of hygiene and safety.

It remains important to take particular care of persons with underlying conditions and particularly diabetes, who are at significantly increased risk of severe COVID-19. We urge these people to really take special care and to shield themselves from exposure where possible.

The message remains: by wearing a mask you are protecting the ones you love. And heading into the festive season, there is greater need to be mindful and continue to build on the lessons learnt this year. The protection of our most vulnerable loved ones remains in our collective hands to residents about adhering to the Golden Rules.

**Always wear a mask when in public and follow the 5 Golden Rules**

- 1. Wash hands**
- 2. Don't touch face**
- 3. Keep 1,5m apart**
- 4. Cover your cough**
- 5. Sick? Stay home**



## Message from HoD

**W**e are nearing the end of an extraordinary and unprecedented year in which we were stretched as individuals and as a health system. As I am writing this, I am mindful that the challenge is not over and that our collective vigilance and response will be required in the months to come.

Many of us have faced personal challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. To those who have lost loved ones, our thoughts are with you. As you grieve a loved one, I wish that you may find some consolation from family and loved ones; and also from supportive colleagues.

Our province has endured economic and social hardship for months. Many households were affected and lives changed by the pandemic, which has taught us ways to work, socialise and live differently.

Despite the hardship, COVID-19 taught us many valuable lessons. As I spoke to staff in reflection sessions, I

was struck by how people working in various departments, professions and environments could pull together as one. As an organisation, we have really rallied together. Reflecting on the reason for this cohesion, I really think that our single-minded commitment to this cause (“the greater good”) is what has made us stronger.

Despite the future potentially containing a resurgence or second wave of infections, I am confident that this overall commitment will ensure our collective success as a health system – just as it did earlier this year. We really do have extraordinary people in our organisation. Thank you for your commitment, selfless service and many sacrifices which cannot be tallied. I thank you on behalf of the patients’ lives you have improved.

I sincerely wish that each staff member may be able to get some well-deserved rest during the holiday period and may you and your loved ones be safe and blessed.



## 9-Year Old Receives Life-Saving Bone Marrow Transplant

Sandiso is a 9-year-old boy from Durban. He dreams of becoming a hip-hop artist like Cassper and enjoys watching rugby, especially when Siya Kolisi is playing. His dreams nearly came to a crashing halt in January 2020 when he was diagnosed with idiopathic aplastic anaemia.

“Sandiso is the first patient referred specifically to RCWMCH for a bone marrow transplant,” says Professor Alan Davidson, who heads up the Haematology and Oncology unit at the hospital.



Unlike other forms of transplantation, bone marrow transplants don't involve a surgical procedure. The stem cells which have been collected from a donor's bone marrow or peripheral blood are infused very much like a blood transfusion.

Stem cell transplantation is used as a medical treatment for life-threatening blood disorders, for blood cancers such as leukaemia and lymphoma and for some inherited disorders which can be corrected with bone marrow new stem cells. It replaces your bone marrow with healthy cells which can fight cancer or perform vital functions for the recipient.

**Become a donor and save lives, like that of Sandiso. Visit The South African Bone Marrow Registry: <https://sabmr.co.za> or The Sunflower Fund: [www.sunflowerfund.org](http://www.sunflowerfund.org)**





## **Metro Health Services’ World Palliative Care Day: MEC Health commemorates lives lost during COVID-19**

For this year’s World Palliative Care Day, Western Cape Minister of Health, Dr Nomafrrench Mbombo, together with community members and healthcare professionals gathered to memorialise the “Lost Butterflies”; by lighting a candle in their honour followed by a moment of silence. The gathering was hosted by the Klipfontein and Mitchells Plain Palliative Care Connect Team and Substructure colleagues at the Lenteguur Psychiatric Hospital Conference Centre in Mitchells Plain on Thursday 15 October.

“Many patients and families were affected by COVID-19 and many lost their lives to the virus which caused so much pain and anxiety in the home. On behalf of the Department, we offer our condolences and prayers to all affected by COVID-19 and to those suffering with life-threatening illnesses who are living in challenging times. We salute our “Lost Butterflies” and will always remember their lives and their legacies”, concludes Minister Mbombo.

### **About Palliative Care**

It is an interdisciplinary team approach that improves the quality of life for patients and their families facing the problems associated with a life-threatening illness, through the prevention and relief of suffering, early identification, assessment and treatment of pain and other problems be it physical, psychosocial or spiritual.





## Professor Elmi Muller wins 2019 UCT Alan Pifer Award

In 2008 Professor Elmi Muller, then a young transplant surgeon based at Groote Schuur hospital, completed the world's first kidney transplant between an HIV-positive patient and donor. Now, 12 years later, Muller is recognised as a global authority on kidney and liver transplantation and a trailblazer in the field of organ transplantation in HIV-positive patients. It is this dedication to making organ transplantation available to vulnerable people that has led to Muller being recognised with the 2019 University of Cape Town (UCT) Alan Pifer Award.

The award, which carries a purse of 20 000 rands, is awarded annually by UCT's vice-chancellor in recognition of outstanding welfare-related research that benefits South Africa's disadvantaged people.

In Muller's case it recognises her commitment to confronting the inequities that exist globally in organ donation and her longstanding work in ensuring that HIV-positive patients with renal failure can safely receive lifesaving organ transplants.

Muller, who has been head of the Transplant Unit at Groote Schuur Hospital since 2011 and who is now also head of the Division of General Surgery at UCT, has a long list of professional accomplishments to her name. Beyond her clinical expertise and experience in building both kidney and liver transplant programmes at Groote Schuur, her research prowess was recently recognised with an A1 NRF rating. NRF ratings are allocated based on a researcher's recent research outputs and impact as perceived by international peer reviewers. She has also impacted global public health policy, serving on the World Health Organization's Task Force for Transplantation and as a member of the International Declaration of Istanbul Custodian Group from 2010 to 2016, when she was elected chair of the group. As of 2020 she is the first person from Africa to take on the role of president of the International Transplantation Society (TTS).

## Be Aware Of The Dangers of Ingesting Methylated Spirits



There has been an increase in the number of calls received about the consumption of methylated spirits, according to the Poisons Information Helpline of the Western Cape. Since March 2020, most calls have been about exposure to hand sanitisers, as these products have become readily available during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Over the five-month period (March – July) in 2019, the Poison Information Helpline of the Western Cape managed 90 calls concerning methylated spirits, compared to the 104 calls during the same period in 2020. The current patient data illustrates that the consumption of methylated spirits has always been a problem. Parents are to supervise their children who may potentially ingest these dangerous spirits, while adults must also refrain from ingesting it.

Methylated spirits are ethanol that has additives to make it bad-tasting,

foul-smelling, or nauseating to discourage recreational consumption. Despite these off-putting effects, research shows that methylated spirits are occasionally consumed as a surrogate alcohol.

“Methanol is an incredibly dangerous and a potentially life-threatening spirits that causes high toxicity in humans if ingested. Methanol can cause damage to the optic nerve and may cause permanent blindness,” says Carine Marks, Director for Tygerberg Hospital’s Poison Centre.

Have you ever heard the age-old expression, “blind drunk”? The origin of this expression refers to permanent blindness suffered by impoverished and homeless alcoholics who, unable to buy liquor, decided to drink cheap alternatives containing methanol.

“Intoxicated patients should be admitted to a healthcare facility and observed for at least four hours. Children, who accidentally ingested methylated spirits, might show excessive drowsiness with a low blood sugar and will need careful observation,” concludes Marks.





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**Inform**

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# VACCINATION CAMPAIGN

## Free immunisations for children

The Western Cape Department of Health is making important childhood immunisations available to children who have fallen behind due to the coronavirus pandemic. Immunisations have had an enormous impact on the health of children and protect them from vaccine-preventable diseases like measles, diarrhoea and diphtheria. The scientific evidence is clear: immunisations for your child are effective and help save lives. With the COVID-19 pandemic, the last thing we need is an outbreak of another disease.

Lockdowns and school closures have

made it harder for parents and children to access immunisation services, and many healthcare workers have been diverted to the province's COVID-19 response.

This had led to a 22% reduction in immunisations at our facilities. Since August this year, we stated reintroducing free immunisation services and we would like to thank parents for always accessing these services.

The City of Cape Town has also established field clinics to allow for the separation of general health care and COVID-19 care at most of its clinics. Staff at these facilities are prioritising the need for childhood immunisations, following up on missed appointments, and checking the Road to Health booklet and the child's immunisation status.



## How do I know when my child needs to catch up?

This depends on your child's age and which immunisations they have already received. The best way to figure out what your child needs is to check the full immunisation schedule as outlined in the Road to Health booklet or contact your clinic for assistance. Children receive 16 immunisations between birth and the age of 12. Of these, 14 are administered in the first 18 months of their lives. At age 6 and 12, children are due for booster doses. Girls in Grade 5 in public schools also receive the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine, which has proven to be effective in preventing cervical cancer. Parents are reminded to make their appointments and bring their healthy children to the clinics for these free immunisations. The HPV vaccine will again be administered next year in public schools once it is safe to do so.

'COVID-19 disrupted daily routines. Many parents are questioning whether they still need to get their children vaccinated, and low immunisation rates compromise progress in all other areas of health for both mothers and children. I recommend that mothers take their children to local clinics where primary healthcare nurses can administer immunisations that will protect their children against serious diseases. Vaccines play a central role in ending preventable child deaths. Of



course, this should be done in strict adherence to the COVID-19 protective measures,' said Dr Nomafrench Mbombo, Western Cape Minister of Health.

'The COVID-19 outbreak reveals what is at stake when communities do not have the protective shield of immunisation against an infectious disease. Vaccines are the most effective tool to prevent outbreaks of dangerous diseases. That's why staying informed about the benefits of vaccines and the risks of not getting vaccinated is more important than ever. The science is clear. Vaccines are safe, effective and life-saving tools to prevent outbreaks,' added Minister Mbombo.

Parents are reminded to make their appointments and bring their healthy children to the clinics for these free immunisations. If you have questions about vaccines, the vaccine schedule, or how to catch up if your child did not start receiving vaccines during the pandemic, talk to your health practitioner. Parents can also find information about immunisations and when their child is due for immunisation from credible sources, such as the World Health Organization.

Parents can use social media to share their positive views about childhood immunisations, using the hashtag #VaccinesWork. For more information about the campaign, follow Western Cape Government Health on Facebook.





# The importance of good oral health

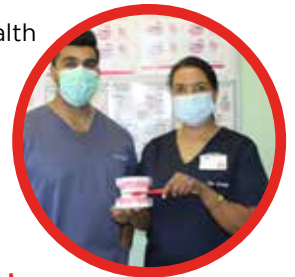
In observance of World Oral Health month which is highlighted annually in September, the importance of good oral health and hygiene at home is vital to ensure that your gums stay healthy, smile stays bright and your teeth stay white.

“The mouth is the opening to the body and pathogens find their way in via the mouth and COVID-19 is no exception,” says Mansoor Mohamed, Dentist at Hanover Park Community Day Centre.

“Maintaining oral health is an important factor in overall health especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of the Western Cape Government Health’s Golden Hygiene standards of mask-wearing, social distancing, hand washing and sanitising, we should also pay extra

attention to the health of our mouths,” says Mohamed.

**Pledge 1: Brush your teeth twice a day for two minutes with fluoride toothpaste**



This is by far the most effective pledge you can make to improve your oral health. Brushing twice a day not only makes sure you are brushing off plaque and bacteria from your teeth and gums, but the fluoride in toothpaste means that your teeth stay protected throughout the day.

For children up to three years old, use a smear of toothpaste with fluoride and

after three years old we recommend using a pea-sized amount of toothpaste. We recommend that parents supervise the dental care of their children until the age of seven. The best time to brush is at night before you go to bed.



### **Pledge 2: Cut down on sugary foods and drinks and snack healthier**

Drink plenty of water and cut down on how much and

how often you have sugary foods and drinks. Keep sugar consumption to mealtimes. This will reduce the time your teeth are under acid attack. For many, the secret to tackling snacking is not to cut it out altogether but to simply snack healthier. This means that instead of reaching for the biscuit jar when you feel peckish, you choose a handful of nuts or some cheese instead. These snacks are much more tooth-friendly, they are non-acidic, low in sugar and will still give you the energy boost you need.

### **Pledge 3: Clean between your teeth**

You might think it unnecessary, but whilst brushing your teeth is vital, your



toothbrush can't reach everywhere. Floss or interdental brushes get between your teeth. By leaving these areas untouched, they can become a breeding ground for plaque which can cause both tooth decay and gum disease. You may even consider using a mouth rinse to remove plaque from between your teeth.

### **Pledge 4: Visiting the dentist**



Maintaining regular visits to your dental team will always be important.

During this period of uncertainty, it is best to always check before any appointments that you have by phoning ahead. Be prepared for your appointment to either be delayed or cancelled. This is for the safety of both staff and patients. Emergency dental treatment is still available, but other, more routine procedures may be postponed for the foreseeable future until more dental services are phased again.

### **Pledge 5: Keeping good personal hygiene**



One of the most important things to remember, is that doing these things and being as hygienic as possible doesn't just help protect you, but it also protects those around you.

- Change your toothbrush regularly
- Sharing is not caring: Never share a toothbrush
- Clean and disinfect your bathroom regularly

For better oral health, hygiene and well-being, it is important we all take these measures to protect ourselves and each other. Overall to save yourself a trip to the dentist, practice good oral health for a happy family and healthy mouth.



# George Hospital in global mural project

**G**eorge Hospital is one of only six hospitals in the world that were selected to participate in The Balcony Bands Mural Project by painting six murals that depict the coming together of people during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. The multi-panel design is based on real life stories of people bringing joy to their neighbours during periods of lockdown. The design is painted on six continents in the countries where the stories took place: Italy, Brazil, South Africa, Iraq, Australia, and the United States.

The paintings were unveiled on Friday, 18 September, at The Balcony Bands event. Singer Elvis Blue and local artists entertained staff at George Hospital at

The Balcony Bands event.

“The paintings serve as a reminder of the strength of the human spirit and how we responded as a hospital, and a global community. It is a testimony to the determination and resilience of all the Health Care

Workers at George Hospital who joined together to care for patients with SARS-CoV-2 during the 2020 pandemic.

The Balcony Bands Mural Project was a tremendous opportunity for staff to participate in a creative and stimulating activity, away from the frontline and support their emotional wellbeing. We are excited to unveil the completed project today,” says George Hospital CEO Michael Vonk.



Staff had the opportunity over two days in August to put brush to canvas and create a finished product that will be viewed by staff and patients for years to come, reflecting on 2020 and its challenges. The project was initiated and funded by Foundation for Hospital Art: FFHA, an international non-profit organisation ([www.hospitalart.org](http://www.hospitalart.org)).

George Hospital would like to thank the following persons for making this event a memorable one: Elvis Blue (artist), Musi-sean (artist), Lynette De Jager (artist), Maria van Rooyen (staff member and artist), Coenraad (artist), Hanly Jumat (artist), Deidre Cloete (photographer), Jacques van der Merwe (videographer),



Marais Kruger ( MC), and SND Productions for the sound and stage. We would also like to thank the staff responsible for all the arrangements. Also, a huge thank you for the George Community and their support during the pandemic.

### **More about The Foundation for Hospital Art**

The Foundation for Hospital Art was established in 1984 and is dedicated to involving patients and volunteers worldwide to create colourful, soothing artwork donated to hospitals to help soften the often stressful hospital experience. Throughout the years, over 1 000 000 volunteers and patients have united to create over 48 000 paintings for over 6 000 hospitals in 195 countries.

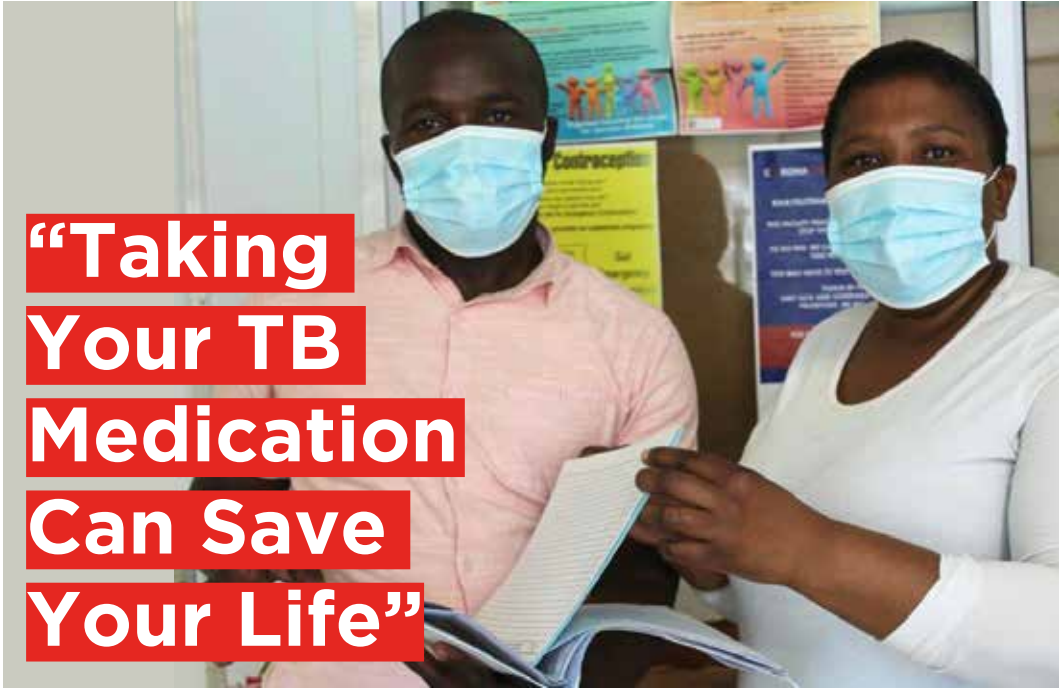
Wear a mask to keep those near you safe. **Together we can protect our community.**



Western Cape  
Government  
Health







# “Taking Your TB Medication Can Save Your Life”

**T**he COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on the way normal health services are provided to patients in the Western Cape. Some chronic patients have experienced changes to the way they obtain their medication. Due to safety reasons, many avoided going to clinics for chronic health care. Other challenges include patients who did not adhere to their TB treatment or who defaulted on their treatment. To address this, health workers are actively working to track down patients who defaulted on their treatment to ensure they are placed onto treatment again. Zanele Ndibongo is part of the team who work to get

people back onto their treatment. They also track patients and keep them from defaulting, and monitor them for six months. She says getting defaulters back to taking their medication can be a huge and difficult task, but it has its rewards when the patients cooperate and are healed. “Patients sometimes give us a lot of attitude, forgetting that it is their lives that we are trying to save,” she says. Zanele is a Community Healthcare Worker for Philani, based in Khayelitsha Site B Community Health Centre.

Lwando Cengani has also seen the success of his team’s work through patients who successfully complete their treatment with no interruptions in between. “Those are our good clients. It is tough, but if they manage to complete their treatment, they live normal and healthy lives,” he says.

Lwando is a Professional Nurse working with TB patients and is also based in Site B CHC. They enroll and record new TB patients, provide medication and refer them to counselling and treatment. They also do follow-ups to support their patients and to prevent them from defaulting on their medication. They work with a number of NPOs, one of them being Philani. Philani works closely with Western Cape Government Health and provides home-based care in and

around Khayelitsha, doing door-to-door community services and deliver chronic medication to patients.

Although lockdown created lots of difficulties, the healthworkers never stopped working. They have a list of recorded patients and they continued making contact with them. Lwando says they did not make it easy for people to default as services were always available from their side. He says they found ways to make contact and support their patients during lockdown.

The team from Site B CHC works with MSF and TB/HIV Care and a number of other NPO's, which help with getting clients on medication and keeping them on their

treatment until they have completed their course. They provide all relevant information on adherence and treatment and explain the importance of taking medication correctly and not missing any appointments. Patients get motivated and encouraged to complete their treatment on time in order to avoid problems that might occur due to non-adherence. "If anyone has defaulted on their medication for whatever reason, they are welcome to visit the facility as soon as they can and we will assist them to get back on it. We give them guidance on maintaining good adherence by taking treatment on time every day," Zodwa adds.

# Breastfeeding Saves Lives!

- Babies need to be **EXCLUSIVELY BREASTFED** for the first six (6) months of their lives. The baby is offered **NO** other fluids or solids. **ONLY** breast milk.
- Do not time breastfeeds. Allow the baby to feed as often and for as long as the baby wants.
- Breast milk contains **ALL** the necessary nutrients required. Colostrum The first milk produced, is rich in nutrients and antibodies and acts as the first 'vaccine', helping to protect the baby from infections, allergies and diarrhoea.
- Avoid using artificial teats, bottles or pacifiers (dummies); It will interfere with breastfeeding, are difficult to clean and carry germs that can make your baby sick.
- Working mothers can still breastfeed by expressing their breast milk and storing it for later use.



# Preventing Falls in Children



**T**he Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital (RCWMCH) annually treats approximately 7500 children for injuries which are

preventable. For every child death as a result of injury, many more are hospitalised, hundreds of emergency department visits and thousands of clinic and doctors' visits. Many children surviving their injuries sustain temporary or permanent, life changing disabilities. There is little focus on these injuries despite injury being the number one killer of young children in our communities in South Africa.

"Children are naturally curious and while exploring the world around them, they will fall. Not all falls require treatment; however, many children sustain injuries so serious that it requires

treatment or hospitalisation. Falls are the number one cause of childhood injury seen at RCWMCH, accounting for nearly half of all injuries. Over 2 819 children were treated for serious falls, a 5% more

than 2018," says Professor Sebastian van As (Head of Trauma Unit, Red Cross Children's Hospital).

Falls accounted for 60% of head injuries. Head injuries are far more common than expected. The RCWMCH treated 763 children for head injuries. Often it is ignored, and children suffer the consequences later in school and later in their work lives.

Children aged 0 to 5 years were at greater risk of fall-related injuries. 64% of these falls took place at home, 17% at playgrounds and 16% at schools. Children 0 to 4 were at greater risk of falls at home and age group 5 to 12 years was at greater risk of falling at school and on playgrounds.



“From the moment your baby starts to crawl, the world is a magical place filled with new adventures and discoveries, says Yolande Baker, Executive Director of ChildSafe. “From a child’s perspective, everything is a potential mountain to climb (that giant bookshelf), obstacle to overcome (those pesky stairs) or mysterious place to investigate (anywhere beyond the safety gate). Little bumps will happen, but ChildSafe is here to help so these brave expeditions don’t result in something more serious”.

## ChildSafe recommends these safety tips for preventing falls:

### Keep Kids From Climbing Near Windows

- For your crawlers and climbers, move chairs, cribs and other furniture away from windows to help prevent window falls.
- Do not let children climb on furniture or use drawers or shelves as steps.

### Secure Kids When Seated

- Keep babies and young kids strapped in when using highchairs, infant carriers, swings and strollers.
- If your baby is in a carrier, remember to place it on the floor, not on top of a table or other furniture.

### Help Babies Learn to Stand and Walk Safely

- Baby walkers unfortunately do not come with safety features that prevent them from rolling down the stairs, and it’s easy for children to fall or reach higher objects that may be unsafe. So please be extra careful.

### Play on Soft Surfaces at Playgrounds

- Take your kids to playgrounds with shock-absorbing surfaces such as rubber, synthetic turf, sand, pea gravel, wood chips or mulch. If your child falls, the landing will be more cushioned than on asphalt, concrete, grass or dirt.

### Use Shopping Trolley for Kids

- If you are placing your child in a shopping trolley seat, use a harness or safety belt. If the belt is missing or broken, select another cart.

### Watch Out for the Stairs

- Use approved safety gates at the tops and bottoms of stairs and attach them to the wall, if possible.
- Actively supervise toddlers on stairs. Hold their hands when walking up and down stairs.

**If a fall does occur:** Do not try to move your child; call Emergency Services for help (112 OR 10177). For more information on prevention of falls, call ChildSafe at 021 685 5208 or please visit [www.childsafe.org.za](http://www.childsafe.org.za)

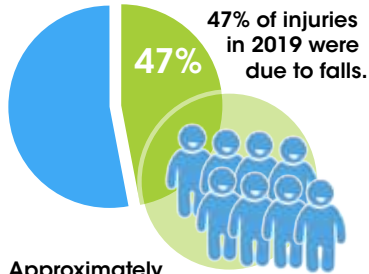
#### About ChildSafe

ChildSafe, an injury prevention unit based at the Red Cross War Memorial Children’s Hospital is a non-profit organisation that aims to reduce and prevent injuries of children through research, education and recommendations to legislation. We work with other non-profits, government, corporates and communities to achieve this. Our core focus though is the prevention of unintentional injuries that are usually regarded as accidents, such as, burns, falls, drowning, road traffic crashes, choking and poisoning.

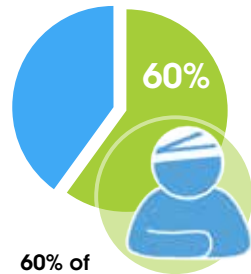
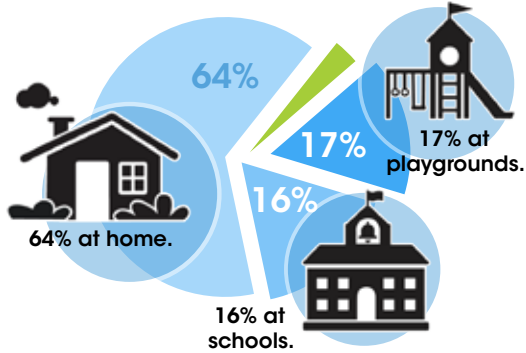


# PREVENT FALLS

Over 2800 children are treated at Red Cross Children's Hospital for falls every year



Approximately 8 children were treated daily.



Don't leave babies unattended on high surfaces.



- change babies on the floor.



Pick up things and wipe wet floors.



Use playpen or a safe enclosed space when caregiver is busy.

Strap in babies and young children in pushchairs and highchairs.



Walkers/rings can overbalance, tip and babies can fall.



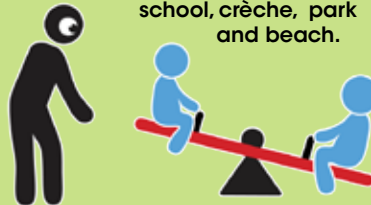
Reposition your furniture, far from windows.

At home

Install safety gates for stairs.



Actively supervise children at home, school, crèche, park and beach.



Use a harness or safety belt when using a shopping trolley seat.



Install bed rail guards to prevent falls from bed.



Out & about

Never jump out of any moving vehicle such as a train or bakkie.



Wear a helmet when cycling or skateboarding

IN AN EMERGENCY

Call Emergency Services for help (112 OR 10177)





“

**Inspire**

”

She has worked in provincial and local government health departments within the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape. Her career has led to advisory and consultative roles to various ministries of health in Africa and in multinational organisations across the globe. Women's Month 2020 brought an opportunity to gain a greater understanding of what influences Minister Nomafrench Mbombo to always strive to eclipse the status quo and whatever challenges come her way.

**Photo credit:**  
Joyrene Kramer/  
Spotlight

# In conversation with Minister Nomafrench Mbombo



### **What underpins your career focus and leadership style?**

My area of interest and what's close to my heart is community empowerment as agency to reclaim the voices of the populations at risk such as young women & girls, rural women and minority groups.

### **What keeps you motivated?**

The commitment in ensuring patient dignity; which means better health facilities, adequate medication, proper medical equipment etc. This coupled with the desire to fix South Africa for the future of our children.

### **Describe your daily experience of fighting the pandemic**

There is always something new to experience - this is a new virus. No one knows about it. This means there is new information all the time, I must keep myself informed all the time so I can spread well researched information.

I have to keep coming up with new, innovative ways of driving the COVID-19 message home to 6million diverse people. I am now in the middle of a Behavioural Change Campaign, where I go door-to-door educating people about the importance of adopting the new normal.

### **What skills do you draw on to get through each day?**

Knowing that there is God and He cares for me. I know I can cast all my burdens unto Him and he fights for me. He walks with and opens door for me. My family is also my biggest inspiration and the determination to make a difference in the province, knowing that where I am planted, I grow.

### **What does bravery mean to her?**

Bravery means doing what you need to do regardless of fear, criticism or pessimists. It means focusing on achieving your goal. I had to learn to embrace rejection and to constantly choose myself, that is bravery.

### **What makes your role unique/special?**

I would not know about specialness or uniqueness of my role, but I can say that I am a committed person. I give 100% in everything I do. My role requires that because it involves people's lives. I cannot be complacent there is no room for that.

### **Why is it important, in your opinion, to celebrate women in our work environments and within our communities?**

I believe that a gender-balanced world is of utmost importance. Despite progress, made in South Africa more girls than boys remain out of school more especially in rural areas.

Across the world, 500 million women still lack basic reading and writing skills. Women make up an enormous 64% of the world's illiterate population. Only 23% of the world's politicians are women. Therefore, it makes sense to celebrate women because of the glass ceilings that they have to shatter before getting recognized.

Celebrating women is not about women's superiority to men which is a common misconception. Instead, it's about equal rights for all genders and sexes. It is about bringing awareness to areas this society could improve on like hiring more women and encouraging them to seek and know for sure that they deserve to be in leadership positions.

I can sum it up by saying, it is important to make sure that women are empowered and prepared to take up leadership positions in their communities and workplace.

### **What words of advice would you give to people as they continue to face the pandemic through all walks of life?**

It is important for people to realize that the way out of this pandemic is behavioral change. It is what we do that will determine how long we stay in this pandemic. It's simple things like embracing the new normal which comes with adhering to the COVID-19 Golden Rules such as:

- Wearing of mask when you are in public, to protect other peoples
- Washing of hands for 20 seconds with soap or sanitizing hands
- Constant cleaning of surfaces
- Staying at home and leaving only when it is necessary
- Coughing etiquette



Read and familiarize ourselves with this virus because it is predicted to be here for the next two years.



# Dr Saadiq Kariem on: leadership, operations & innovations

## STARTING OUT

My Department of Health journey started as a young medical officer at Crossroads Community Health Clinic in the 1980s. This was during significant political turmoil and tension, and I was working with some very seasoned and interesting people, including a colleague well into his 80s and who had served in World War II. Years later I was involved with policy development before moving into the health programmes space when I became particularly involved in the province's HIV/AIDS programme. After a very "high-energy" year, I resigned from the Department because of the political tension around HIV and pursued further studies.

## BOOK SMART

Beyond my medical degree (MBChB), I have a Master's degree in Public Health from the University of the Western Cape (UWC) as well as the Fellowship of the College of Public Health Medicine (FCPHM) degree from UCT. Thereafter, I entered hospital management at Groote Schuur Hospital. I also hold an Executive Master's in Business Administration (EMBA) from UCT.



**Dr Saadiq Kariem**  
**WCGH: Chief of Operations**

### **PURPOSE DRIVEN**

I would describe myself as an activist for social justice, and HIV was one of the key areas where there was much activism around in the 80s and 90s. I remember the day when we officially kicked off the Mother to Child Transmission (MTCT) Programme in Khayelitsha. It was on 4 January 1999 and it sparked intense political, social and health activism around HIV for a long time to come.

Serving as the COO and eventually also CEO of Groote Hospital stood me in good stead for learning how to work with our university partners and other stakeholders whilst delivering world class clinical services. These portfolios developed my leadership and management skills that later on also served me in good stead as the Chief Director GENSES and eventually the Chief Director of ECSS.

### **CAREER HIGHLIGHTS**

I worked as the Deputy Director for the HIV/AIDS programme in the province and my responsibility was the implementation of the MTCT Programme. This was during the HIV/AIDS denialism era; I had to make sure the programme went ahead successfully. In fact, it was as a result of the support to the programme that the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) was born. Years later I was awarded the Jakes Gerwel award in Public Health for this work.

Looking back, this period served me in good stead for the current situation of dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Another highlight for me was when I served as a board member on the Council of Medical Schemes

### **HEALTH = FUN**

I enjoy cycling and really love music; my favourite genre is jazz. I try to be attentive to every aspect of good health; be it physical, emotional, spiritual or mental. I don't always get the balance right, but I do try. After all, everybody's got to have something they enjoy doing which allows for that mental downtime so they can

recharge. With my family, we like to go away for short breaks – always where there is sun and surf in summer and the warm springs in winter. That's how we connect more, have fun and relax.

### **GREATEST LESSON LEARNT**

Despite the negativity experienced in very politically charged situations, like COVID-19 and HIV, the power of the human spirit to rise above and transcend those challenges, continues to leave me in awe. I believe when humanity is faced with such grave dangers and challenges the human spirit will triumph. And out of those difficult times one does forge very significant and lasting relationships.

### **FUTURE PROOFING**

Now our challenge is to entrench the new ways of working into our system. The innovations, like tele-health and the delivery of chronic medication we implemented during the pandemic, have to change the way we think about the provision of healthcare. There may be operational and strategic issues around innovation, but what the pandemic has shown us is that we have the technical skills to innovate. So we need more ways of doing things differently but also a greater understanding of the realities which we face so that, as a Department, we reduce inequity and focus on the health needs of the most vulnerable in our society.



LESSONS FROM



IN MANAGEMENT

**Ronell Zondo:**

**Deputy Director Professional Support Services, Overberg District**  
Ronell Zondo has 16 years' experience in clinical health and health administration. She holds a science degree in Physiotherapy amongst other qualifications. She is a Traditional African Spiritual Practitioner – known as Gogo Khanya \*thokozani\* She trained in Kwa Zulu Natal and qualified as iSangoma and uMthandazi in 2019. Ronell hopes for the development, better understanding and growth in the collaboration between these fields.



“A leader has self-awareness, practices self-reflection and learns continuously – and yes, this also includes unlearning! My experience has been that the courage of a leader to engage in difficult conversations with compassion is critical. I fondly remember a lesson in Leadership shared by my mentor and our former HOD, Dr. Beth Engelbrecht: a suggested ‘way of being’ in complex settings is to Stand in Inquiry, meaning: turn judgment into curiosity, turn disagreement into shared exploration, turn defensiveness into self-reflection and turn assumptions into questions.”

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**Helen Hayes:**

**Provincial Manager, Pharmaceutical Services**



As the provincial manager of pharmaceutical services, it is Helen Hayes' responsibility to perform all the functions that ensure a cost effective and efficient pharmaceutical service within the Western Cape Government Health. This also includes developing a pharmaceutical training policy, the monitoring and evaluation of pharmacy practice and standards, and the analysis of technology developments as they relate to pharmacy practice.

“I recall feeling quite overwhelmed at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, and wondered how I would navigate these uncharted waters, but soon realised that I could rely on my colleagues to go beyond their normal call of duty. The most important things I learnt was the value of an excellent electronic communication strategy, to be flexible and most importantly, to provide support and encouragement.”

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**Anita Parbhoo:**

**Medical Manager, Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital (RCWMCH)**

As Medical Manager, Anita Parbhoo directs, supervises and coordinates staff and office activities on a day-to-day basis at RCWMCH to ensure quality patient care. Her role extends to budgeting as well as maintaining medical and staff records. She performs well under pressure and employs a wealth of healthcare systems experience.



“Try to be accessible and approachable so that team members feel comfortable coming to you with suggestions or problems. It is vital to understand where each team member fits in and acknowledge their contribution towards patient care. Encourage a working environment where staff feel comfortable to speak up about sensitive issues – this can be done through effective role modelling - and then, very importantly, when people do



### Dr Roshni Mistry:

Medical Manager, Tygerberg Hospital and Paediatric Allergologist

Dr Mistry is responsible for managing the Department of Medicine and the MICO (Medical Imaging and Clinical Oncology) at Tygerberg Hospital, with a particular emphasis on sound corporate and clinical governance. After completing her medical degree, she went on to obtain an MBA at UCT's Graduate School of Business followed by an exchange scholarship to the London School of Business. She is still an active clinician with a particular interest in Paediatric Allergology, in which she holds a diploma. She also holds diplomas in Child Health and HIV Management respectively.



“Leadership and Management are guided by principles. However, motivating and bringing the best out in your teams is all about being in tune and being sensitive to different personalities and values. Bringing that together, is an art we all have. As women, we have the advantage of being emotionally in touch with people's feelings and are able to adapt and change course. So, do not doubt yourselves, you are an inspiration to those you lead, through you own personal style.”

### Marika Champion:

Director, Communications Directorate



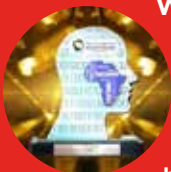
Marika Champion is at the helm of communications within the organisation; leading a team that ensures the accurate and consistent distribution of information while encouraging knowledge-sharing for the patients we serve as a health system and as fellow colleagues making up the Western Cape Government Health workforce. The Communications Directorate acts in the best interest of safeguarding the organisation's reputation and helps to nurture the organisational culture in

partnership with like-minded stakeholders.

“Being genuinely concerned about people's development means giving honest feedback and really helping them to see the best course of action. I tend to share my thinking, the thinking of top management and new developments to ensure that they are involved in the strategic issues, even if it does not affect them so directly. Lately I have become freshly aware that we are living in a new, strange and changing world. Younger people have perspectives which we desperately need. Making them part of discussions and decision making is beneficial both to the organisation and to their development. They are the senior leaders of tomorrow; we need to make them part of things.”

### Have you heard?

#### Western Cape DoH wins New Gen Silver Award



Congratulations are in order! The COVID-19 Public Facing Dashboard placed second in the category Best Use of Technical Innovation at the 2020 New Generation Social and Digital Media Awards. Well done to all the teams involved for your tireless work and admirable contribution to the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. To access the dashboard, visit

<https://coronavirus.westerncape.gov.za/covid-19-dashboard>



“speak up, we should listen and address the issues raised.”

**Lynette Van Der Berg:**  
CEO, Stikland Hospital

For Lynette Van Der Berg, as CEO for Stikland Hospital, her primary purpose is to manage the institution efficiently and effectively; ensuring organisational compliance with regulations, laws, procedures and policies. Her role sees her taking charge of situations, making critical decisions, and sharing her knowledge to those who need it most in the hospital.

“I have learnt that leadership calls for personal authenticity and integrity, visibility and engagement, unapologetic respect, random and small acts of kindness, empathic relationships and decisive or clear action. Also, working with a team is the greatest leverage for maximum impact or results. Having a positive and a “can do” attitude is important and finally to take care of yourself is critical to ensuring a good balance between what the work is about and who you are in that space.”

**Bulelwa Gaji-Mbunge:**

Assistant Manager Nursing, Nolungile CDC

Bulelwa Gaji-Mbunge has 15 years nursing experience and has held her current role since 2016. She has a nursing qualification from the Western Cape College of Nursing. By motivating and supporting staff, she plays an integral role in helping them achieve their goals. She enjoys being in the great outdoors and spending time with her loved ones.



“I believe it is a leader’s role to drive change, not to avoid it. Never stop learning, leadership and learning are indispensable from each other and therefore new ideas are crucial. Be accountable for actions and give credit where credit is due. Resilience is key - the true strength of a leader is not how they perform during good times but how one rolls up their sleeves and produces when times get difficult. Be open to feedback and lead by example. Know that the job is not to please everyone rather it is to get the job done right.”



# Frontline SHEroes

This Women's Month we shared some experiences from women working within the Department, supporting our fight against the pandemic, across our official Facebook page @WCGHealth. They represent the thousands of women that work tirelessly to make our health system work better.



Dr Nomafrench Mbombo



Ntomboxolo Sanadayo



Thabisa Jongolo



Chloe Petersen



Nomeko Siyawu



Anneline Carolissen



Andisa Cassammo



Ireen Tamboer



Fatima Peters



Shjanneil Busch



Sheila Hill



Merle Vellem



Zintle Moya



Sandra Kilo



Monique Johnstone



Frances Fass



Dr Mishqa Jakoet



Tamsyn Lesch



Noncedo Maci-Nani



Juanita Arendse



Thumeka Gxilishe



Berenique Ruiters



Marianna Steyn



Dr Arifa Parker



Dr Nontembiso Aphiwe Mlana

**“Bravery means doing what you need to do regardless of fear, criticism or pessimists, it means focusing on achieving your goal.”** – Dr Nomafrench Mbombo, Western Cape MEC for Health

**“Bravery means even though you are scared you still do the right thing.”** – Anneline Carolissen, Personal Assistant

**“Bravery is being able to accept your strengths and weaknesses.”** – Frances Fass, Facility Manager

**“Committing to serving our communities, despite the fear of being at great risk to catch the coronavirus as frontliners, and looking at the situation as an opportunity to save lives – that is bravery to me.”** – Thumeka Gxilishe, Community Healthcare Worker

**“Bravery to me means that despite being fearful, you can push through.”** – Tamsyn Lesch, EHWP Client Relationship Manager

**“Bravery means doing what needs to be done regardless of your own insecurities.”** – Arifa Parker, Infectious diseases specialist

**“Bravery to me means having the will/drive to do what needs to be done despite the anxiety or fear.”** – Nontembiso Aphiwe Mlana, Doctor

**“Bravery means to have the ability and strength, as an everyday human being, to push through and carry on despite any kind of hardship that lies ahead.”** – Marianna Steyn, Volunteer Contact Tracer

**“Bravery is facing this virus every day and keeping yourself and others safe in the best way you can.”** – Ntomboxolo Sanadayo, Cleaner

**“Bravery means being a front line worker in this epidemic, being exposed and seeing colleagues passing away due to the virus, yet still honouring our oath to serve humanity.”** – Thabisa Jongolo, Clinical Nurse Practitioner

**“Bravery is being willing to do something that scares you.”** – Chloe Petersen, Queue Marshall

**“As frontline workers we need to be strong for patients and also for our colleagues in this time.”** – Nomeko Siyawu, Porter

**“I call myself imbokodo (brave) woman, as a frontline worker...dealing with trauma cases does not stop me from doing my job as I am passionate about saving lives.”** – Noncedo Maci-Nani, Emergency Care Officer

**“Bravery means putting other people first.”** – Andisa Cassammo, Linen Store Assistant

**“Bravery to me means forging ahead loyally, faithfully and armed as best as you possibly can in the pursuit of doing the right thing.”** – Fatima Peters, Deputy Director

**“Bravery to me means facing your fears. Face your fears and find peace in your storm.”** – Monique Johnstone, Communications Officer

**“Bravery during this pandemic is remaining calm and staying alert.”** – Merle Vellem, Site Manager Security

**“Bravery means going out EVERY DAY to fight this pandemic.”** – Dr Mishqa Jakoet, Doctor

**“To me, bravery means conquering fears; the known and the unknowns.”** – Sheila Hill, Forensic Pathology Officer

**“Displaying confidence and calmness when facing emergencies is an act of bravery.”** – Berenique Ruiters, Community Service Professional Nurse

**“Bravery means being strong, responsible and thinking beyond ourselves; thinking about others.”** – Sandra Kilo, Housekeeper

**“Bravery means standing by your word and being willing to fight the good fight without compromising yourself or your loved ones.”** – Juanita Arendse, Director

**“To me, bravery means going out and doing what needs to be done despite the risk you may be taking or the negative opinion you may be facing.”** – Zintle Moya, Social Worker

**“Bravery speaks of being willing to do what it takes to the benefit of others”** – Ireen Tamboer, Admin Clerk

**“I believe I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me so I do not have to fear, but can trust that I can handle any situation.”** – Shjanneil Busch, Clinical Program Coordinator





2020

INTERNATIONAL YEAR  
OF THE NURSE AND  
THE MIDWIFE



# Year of the Nurse and Midwife August-October

## Cardio Thoracic Nursing Team | Groote Schuur Hospital



The support call team consists of Operational Manager Nuraan Damones and professional nurses: Sumaya Davids-Cajee, Marel Isaacs, Angela Mtombeni, Xoliswa Sijawe, Nontobeka Tobo, Malusi Gqamngwana, Maria Elenor Gerbach, Thembisa Hoko, Joeseoph Hugo, Maureen Manasse, Nolundi Mnuakwa, Vivian Ntloko, Annamarie van Schalkwyk and Janine Wildschut.

Parts of the team change constantly but Sr Watson has been part of the team since 2006, Nurse Cupido since 2011 and Nurse Matee since 2019.

## Anna Williams| Enrolled Nursing Assistant, Tygerberg Hospital

Nurse Williams has 34 years' experience in ophthalmology and has been in nursing for 42 years. "I worked in a hospital in Fraserburg as a general assistant. Watching how patients suffer influenced my decision to become a nurse and be part of the healing process," she says.



She is close to retiring and yet still wants to give so much more to her patients that are blind and have eye problems. "I ensure early detection of cataracts, provide health education to communities with regards to caring for the blind and the importance proper instillation of eye drops and encourage communities at primary level to comply to treatment provided as well as the dangers of non-compliance," she concludes.

## Sanna Makok| Professional Ophthalmic Nurse, Beaufort West Hospital



Nurse Makok has 41 years of experience in nursing, including experience in Primary Health Care, Community Health Science and Midwifery. She obtained her postgraduate diploma in Ophthalmology at UCT 7 years ago.

For the past 10 years, she has been working as an Ophthalmic nurse for the Central Karoo District, delivering quality service to 12 facilities. "My role fits into the COPC framework, as I am reaching out to the community delivering primary eye health care to the communities in the Central Karoo District," Nurse Makok explains. "Thank you to to management, my fellow colleagues, doctors and other health care workers for the support and acknowledgement of my competencies."

**Felicity Du Plessis | Professional Nurse: Ophthalmology, Lady Michaelis CDC**



Sr Du Plessis has been an ophthalmic nurse for 35 years now and draws on her innate capacity to be compassionate and kind, as well as remain calm, professional and reassuring when working with patients and their families.

Sr Du Plessis says that the biggest challenges faced are the lack of time, resources and funding. Her biggest joy is the ability to alleviate the burden placed on patients due to restricted or limited vision. "My main objective is to go out into the community; to screen, assess and identify ophthalmic concerns before they become severe and cause blindness or permanent damage," she concludes.

**Hendrick Jacobs | Assistance Nurse, Western Cape Rehabilitation Centre**



Hendrick Jacobs (51) specialises, rehabilitates and cares for patients with spinal injuries. Originally from Springbok in the Northern Cape, Hendrick has 29 years of dedicated service in the Department and has passionately shared his expertise for 14 years at the WCRC. Hendrick's managers speak very highly of him and the skills he utilises to engage with his patients. "I listen to them like a loving parent and communicate with a caring and compassionate voice to ensure that they feel comfortable in their new environment for the next few weeks and form a bond of trust with them so that they are willing to comply with their recovery process and behaviour change," he adds.

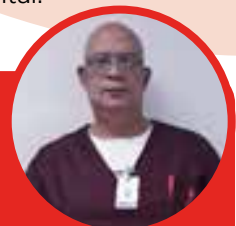


**Gertrude Dodson | Professional Nurse, Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital**

Sr Dodson has been a nurse since June 1991 and is currently in trauma for 28 years. She is devoted to the work she does and when speaking about the decision to follow this career path she says, "I love doing nursing as it was always my passion since childhood."

"Working in orthopaedics is just amazing," Sr Dodson says, adding that how the body interacts is what truly fascinates her. She always strives to come to the child's level as being child friendly is very important in her line of work at the hospital.

**Frans Malan | Staff Nurse, Eerste River Hospital**



Mr Malan has been a nurse for 10 years and has held his current position as staff nurse for 2 years and 11 months. "Nursing someone back to health is one of the greatest feelings ever," he says. Through his work, he serves his community and meets people from all walks of life. He has also gained job satisfaction as he is now fulfilling a lifelong dream "I believe I am well equipped to give patient education both in and outside the hospital setting. As a nurse I see the need to inform and create awareness of compliance, self-treatment, access to health care facilities and continuity of care. This work is done in close conjunction with a disciplinary team," he concludes.

**Jacqueline Vlotman |Psychiatric Nurse, Lentegeur Psychiatric Hospital:  
Adolescent Unit**



Jaqueline Vlotman is a professional nurse specialising in psychiatry and offering mental healthcare services to youth at the Lentegeur Psychiatric Hospital for the past six years. She has 28 years of dedicated services to the Department. Jacqueline started her psychiatric nursing career at the Tygerberg Hospital, where she gained valuable expertise and is effectively implementing it in her current position.

“Hearing and seeing the positive stories from my patients brings me joy. To see my thriving and happy patients after discharge and see them recognise me in the shop and greet me with a smile brings content to my heart,” she says. “This position builds me as a person and helped me develop resilience to handle all the challenges mental health care has to offer.”

**Zibongiwe Mlonyeni| Mental health practitioner, Stellenbosch Sub-District of the Cape Winelands**

Sr Zibongiwe Mlonyeni is a mental health practitioner with 13 years of nursing experience. “I have learned the importance of caring for your mental health. Even though it is a challenging field, I find it very interesting,” she says. She was drawn to nursing from an early age and felt it was the perfect fit for her as she enjoys helping people. What she enjoys most about her role is listening and empathising with her clients and stepping into the gap for vulnerable, disadvantaged clients.



**Renee Fisher | Deputy Manager: Nursing, Alexandra Hospital**

Nurse Fisher has been a nurse for the past 41 years; serving 15 of those years at Lentegeur Hospital and 16 years at Alexandra Hospital within the area of psychiatry. She employs her communication and interpersonal skills when caring for patients and through her extensive experience, is able to transfer knowledge, skills, competencies and information to other nursing professionals and see growth and improvement.



“I have always had a passion for caring and supporting people. Nursing gave me the opportunity to learn, support, comfort and care for people in their most vulnerable state,” she says.

Find more Year of the Nurse and Midwife features on our official provincial Facebook page: @WCGHealth

For more information on Nursing contact Ms Volene Werely - 021 940 4558 or volene.werely@westerncape.gov.za





# Meet the team behind wellness, diversity and disability awareness

At Head Office, within the Chief Directorate People Management, the sub-directorate Employee Health and Wellness, Diversity and Disability has been working diligently to ensure an improved workplace experience for all WCGH employees since 2008.

## **The team provides a variety of services, including:**

- Providing consultative services to managers and supervisors about the employment and retention of persons with disabilities, and to managers and employees about Employee Health and Wellness Programme (EHWP), as well as matters around Occupational Health and Service;
- Provision of training and development programmes on disability sensitisation and awareness;
- Promoting gender equity and diversity in organizational development;
- Providing advice and support;
- Sharing best practices and learnings; and
- Actively advocating for no violence against women and children following the 365 days of activism approach aiming to heighten an ongoing, sustainable approach reinforced all year round.

The team is proud that the Western Cape Government Health employs over 50% of the number of employees with disabilities within the Western Cape Government. Another highlight is the EHWP engagement which has consistently remained above the comparable sector benchmarks. Not only is there evidence of entrenchment of the programme based on utilisation rates, but the programme has evolved over time to proactively intervene on identified risk. The adoption of the National 365 Days of Activism for No Violence as well as strengthened partnerships & stakeholder engagement (internal & external) also form part of the team’s highlights.

		
<p><b>Disability Management</b></p>	<p><b>Employee Health and Wellness Management</b></p>	<p><b>Diversity Management</b></p>
<p>This unit implements capacity building initiatives through the establishment of institutional mechanisms, promotes accessibility, monitoring and evaluation of policy and procedures, sees to the provision of reasonable accommodation, ensures accountability for disability management, promoting employability, and forging partnerships for empowerment of persons with disabilities.</p>	<p>This unit provides an Employee Health and Wellness Programme which addresses the psycho-social stressors which employees and their families face on a day-to-day basis in their personal and work lives. There are 4 pillars that guide the implementation of Employee Health and Wellness programmes: HIV &amp; AIDS; STI and TB management; Health &amp; Productivity management; Safety Health Environment Risk &amp; Quality (SHERQ) management and Wellness management.</p>	<p>On our journey toward Healthcare 2030, the Western Cape Government Health (WCGH) has implemented interventions and programmes aimed to strengthen an enabling environment and promote an organisational culture that embraces diversity and equality. The department is accountable for achieving the 50% equity target legislated for the public service for women in management. This unit develops, implements and sees to the mainstreaming of strategy, policy, programmes and projects.</p>

## Contact person/s & details from Wellness, diversity and disability directorate

### **Ms. Michelle Buis**

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021 483 5644  
Michelle.Buis@westerncape.gov.za

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### **Ms. Waseema Herabai**

**Assistant Director:** Disability Management  
021 483 5676  
Waseema.Herabai@westerncape.gov.za

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### **Mr. Lucky Mazabelana**

**Senior Personnel Practitioner:** Disability Management  
021 483 6734  
Lucky.Mazabelana@westerncape.gov.za

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### **Mr. Nabeel Ismail**

**Assistant Director:** SHERQ Management  
021 483 3951  
Nabeel.Ismail@westerncape.gov.za

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### **Ms. Janice Andrews**

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“

**Innovate**

”



# Transforming the provision of meals:

## The paperless meal ordering dietitian system

Adequate nutrition is an essential component of wellbeing and has become increasingly important in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Nutrition interventions contribute to and can influence the length of stay and recovery of hospitalised patients. The paperless meal ordering dietitian system (MODS) has been used in the CTICC, Brackengate and Sonstraal field hospitals. The programme was launched on Monday 8 June 2020 when the first patients were admitted to the field hospital.

### How it works

All patients admitted to hospitals are automatically registered for meal orders on MODS. The system registers all as normal diets. The MODS system has been built to capture all the therapeutic diets available for patients in the facility that are coded. Patient diets can be changed on the system selecting the type of diet as per code and short description before scheduled cut off times for meal orders. These changes can be made by admin, nursing staff and dietitians. Dietitians have further access to special codes to make more specialised therapeutic dietary changes.

Summary reports are generated



automatically for the foodservices/ catering unit to advise on the number and type of meals that need to be produced and packed for meal delivery service. Reports such as ward diet lists for each mealtime can be viewed on the system.

The system is currently up and running at Brackengate and Sonstraal.

Automated emails are sent to the foodservices provider at Brackengate as the outside contracted service provider.

At Sonstraal the facility staff in foodservices can access the orders and reports from their



PCs in the foodservice unit at the hospital.

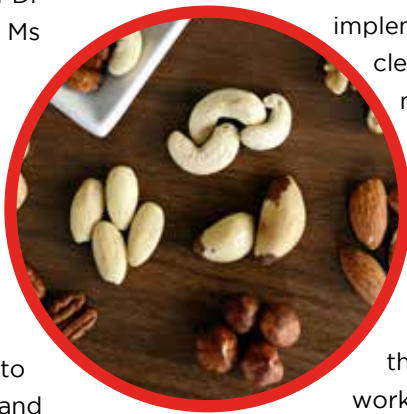
site with implementation in the hospital.



## The people behind it

The team working on this innovation includes Dr Hilary

Goeiman, Ms Millicent February, Ms Nicolette Fredericks, Mr Naziem Jordan (who reprogrammed MODS to the Hospital of Hope’s context), the CTICC catering services team as well as the CTICC commissioning project team under leadership of Dr Anwar Kharwa and Ms Claudette Ruiters, Information Communication Technology service manager, who ensured that all PCs are set up inside and outside the wards for staff to access the system and backup support. Ms N Zimri, dietitian seconded to CTICC, assisted on



## Lessons learned

ecting on the efficacy of MODS, Dr Goeiman says, “I realise that we achieved a lot and that what was developed can be implemented successfully. The system is working very well at Brackengate and Sonstraal intermediate care facilities. As team members came on board, they are noticing how quick and easy it is to change meals on the system.”

“The experience has been one of adapting, learning and constant improvement to address the service need to respond to the novel disease, COVID -19,” she adds.

Working collaboratively, particularly the design/planning team and the implementation team, consistent and clear communication between team members, constant monitoring as implementation happens, being open to find solutions as a collective and making adjustments based on what was and wasn’t working were all lessons learnt by all the colleagues that worked on making this system work to the betterment of the service received by patients.



Hilary



Nicolette



Anwar



Nadia



Millicent



Claudine

# Vredendal Hospital Team Transforms Boiler Room Into Covid-19 Ward



**F**or the staff and patients of Vredendal Hospital, the COVID-19 pandemic sparked innovation that resulted in a solution with lasting benefits.

When the Matzikama subdistrict saw an increase in COVID-19 cases, the hospital needed a dedicated COVID-19 ward.

The hospital did not have space for a dedicated COVID-19 ward inside the facility but had to find a way to care for COVID-19 patients whilst protecting other

patients from possible infection. The solution was a legacy project transforming an unused building into a new ward for COVID-19 patients. The hospital's old boiler room was not functional anymore and only used to store unused items.

The hospital management staff, together with the hospital maintenance team, assessed the hospital premises for potential areas that could be converted into ward space and the old boiler room was identified for this purpose.





While most of the work on the space had to be done by external contractors – due to the nature of the work – the hospital’s maintenance team played a key role in clearing out the area and preparing the space for the contractual work.

Dr Meyer Swanepoel, Manager: Medical services of Vredendal Hospital, says that the additional ward space created will not only be put to good use during the COVID-19 pandemic but will also be utilised in the future to ease patient flow in the facility.



Vredendal Hospital is the only hospital (in the public and private health system) serving the communities in the Matzikama subdistrict, including towns like Lutzville, Klawer, Vanrhynsdorp and Bitterfontein and rural villages including Stofkraal, Molsvlei, Rietpoort and Nuwerus. “With the vast distances our patients, especially those in the remote areas of the subdistrict, have to travel for hospital level care we have unique challenges in our health system, but initiatives like this help us to continue to serve our communities with care and efficiency,” concludes Dr Swanepoel.





# Have You Heard Of COVIDconnect?

The National Department of Health's 'COVIDConnect' is the government's official COVID-19 support service. It's a WhatsApp-based service which allows index cases to anonymously notify their contacts as prompted by the system.

Recently, the public would have received SMSs from the Department of Health giving them vital information, including their COVID-19 test results. They may also have received an alert that they have been identified as a contact of a COVID-19 positive patient. This is part of the COVIDConnect system.

Minister of Health Dr Zweli Mkhize said one of the critical aspects of combatting COVID-19 is the ability to detect positive cases early, track and trace their contacts, and refer them for appropriate management – whether it is immediate testing, isolation or quarantine.

“The digital system that the Department of Health is currently using, called COVIDConnect, brings an easy-to-use self-service portal to your cellular phone. It is freely accessible through WhatsApp and SMS. What also makes it more accessible is that it does not require for a user to have a smart phone but it works on any mobile phone,” Mkhize said.

“This system enhances the physical effort of contact tracking and tracing which is done by our community health workers and volunteers. It automates this traditional process and continuously

engages with the affected user.”

When a patient conducts a test for Coronavirus, their information is picked up from the lab form and they will be informed of their test result, whether positive or negative, by SMS. If the result is positive, the system prompts the patient for further information in order to identify their contacts. The system then immediately dispatches alerts via SMS to those contacts without disclosing the index patient's details.

The nondisclosure of the patient's name is to ensure that their privacy is protected.

In addition, the system can geo-locate the nearest quarantine and isolation facility for the user and the nearest health care facility for patients or their contacts who are experiencing symptoms requiring medical attention.

Users can also get the latest COVID-19 news and information, prevention tips and wellness advice at the touch of a button. There is also a simple risk-assessment tool which will screen users for COVID-19 symptoms and give them advice on whether they should self-isolate or seek professional clinical assistance.

“The surge of this pandemic requires all citizens to participate in such innovations.

As an individual, at home or at work, once you receive this SMS, we urge that you take it upon yourself to appropriately respond as prompted. We believe that this method will significantly enhance contact tracing and allow for us to quickly identify cases that we would not easily trace,” said Mkhize.

“We also want to inform the public that this track and trace service will not infringe people’s privacy or data. In fact, one of the reasons we delayed to implement the system was to ensure that that it passes the legal muster and adheres to legal prescripts relating to personal information, confidentiality and individual and data privacy,” he adds.

Mkhize said the Department held a consultation with Madame Justice Kate O’Reagan, who is the COVID-19 designate judge. Her guidance assisted government to establish regulations on how to implement the track and trace system.

“We take this opportunity to acknowledge the entities that the Department of Health has partnered with, namely Telkom/ BCX, GovChat, Praekilt

## #COVIDConnect #ActNow



Possible case

Do you think you might have COVID-19?

Self-screen now!

Send “CHECK” to 0600 123 456 on WhatsApp for quick advice



Testing

Are you Testing for COVID-19?

Quick & easy steps to get your results!

1. Give a valid cell number, date of birth and address when you test
2. Isolate until you know your status
3. Receive an SMS when your results are ready
4. Follow the link for your results on WhatsApp or WhatsApp “RESULTS” to 082 046 8553



Contact

Have you been identified as a COVID-19 contact?

Don’t worry!

You’ll receive an SMS. Follow the instructions to self-screen. You can do it as many times as you need to.



Scan to self-screen

Thank you for joining the 7 million South Africans already using COVIDConnect to stay safe!



and BlueBird,” Mkhize said.

When you test for COVID-19, supply your healthcare worker with your correct date of birth, physical address and cellphone number. You can then use COVIDConnect to retrieve your test results via your cellphone or you will receive an SMS once your test results are ready.

To receive your results on WhatsApp, just add ‘LetsTalk’ to your phonebook on ‘0820468553’. Type in ‘Results’ on WhatsApp and follow the prompts.

# Follow the 5 Golden Rules of Good Hygiene to stop the spread of coronavirus:



1. Wash your hands often for at least 20 seconds with soap and water



2. Do not touch your face with unwashed hands



3. Cough or sneeze into a tissue or your elbow. Safely throw away the tissue



4. Keep 1,5 metres apart from others



5. Stay home if unwell. Contact a hotline or your health worker

STAY SAFE

**MOVE  
FORWARD**



Western Cape  
Government

Coronavirus Provincial Hotline 021 928 4102

OR MORE INFORMATION: [www.westerncape.gov.za/coronavirus](http://www.westerncape.gov.za/coronavirus)



# LOCKDOWN & COVID-19: THE NEW NORMAL

Find out how some of our fellow colleagues experienced the changes that have arisen as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.





# Hospital Of Hope

## Physiotherapists Help Covid-19 Patients Recover

At the Brackengate Hospital of Hope Intermediate Care Facility (ICF), physiotherapists play an important role in the recovery of many COVID-19 patients. Brackengate physiotherapist Helanie Pool says her team aims to ensure that COVID-19 patients can resume everyday activities after receiving treatment.

“Improving physical function is helping patients in being as functional as possible so that they’re able to get dressed, eat, and wash themselves by the time they go home. Quality of life entails helping them to participate in activities within their communities, families and the workplaces,” explains Helanie.

Some patients who’ve had the Coronavirus needed further care and

may have suffered from severe muscle weakness, joint stiffness and fatigue.

“Addressing individual needs and consequences of COVID-19 includes, but is not limited to, recovery from long-term ventilation, supplemental oxygen requirements resulting in respiratory impairment and immobilisation, along with addressing consequences of pre-existing conditions and co-morbidities,” says Helanie.





Physiotherapists have provided a range of services to patients with each session being unique. These services include:

- Improving exercise tolerance: This entails cardiovascular exercise training in various forms from lower functioning individuals to those who were previously active individuals.
- Respiratory rehabilitation: This includes breathing exercises, thoracic mobility exercises and proning activities.
- Mobility activities: These activities assist patients with moving in and out of bed and walking or returning to their previous level of activity.
- Physical rehabilitation: This involves improving muscle strength through a range of motion exercises.



Helanie says exercise helps to strengthen patients. Benefits of regular exercise include immune regulation, reducing the risk of illness, improved fitness, reducing breathlessness, increasing muscle strength, improved balance, coordination, and concentration, as well as reducing stress and improving mood.

During National Physiotherapy week in September, Brackengate healthcare staff went the extra mile to plan information sessions and a fun walk, under the

themes, 'Rehabilitation after COVID-19' and 'Combating COVID-19 with good health'.

Information sessions addressed the benefits of healthy eating for patients and staff, as well the benefits of exercise to relieve stress.

"We chose to do so as to incorporate not only patient recovery from COVID-19 but also to add a staff welfare component. Including exercise, healthy eating habits and mental and emotional wellbeing of particularly healthcare staff working in COVID-19," explains Helanie.

She adds that their hope is to provide patients with knowledge to manage their healthcare needs outside of the hospital. "The overall aim of physiotherapy is to improve physical function and their quality of life."



Brackengate is an inpatient intermediate care facility. Patients are referred from various hospitals within the Cape Metropole. These patients are then referred for physiotherapy by the physicians in charge of their care.

# Doctor Offers Services For Free At Worcester Hospital To Fight Covid-19

“To have the chance to see and learn from patients affected by the pandemic at the most extreme end of the spectrum has been a great personal learning opportunity.” These are the words of Dr Sashen Naidoo, a medical officer who has been volunteering at Worcester Regional Hospital since April 2020.

**D**r Naidoo’s plans to commence a second contract working as a cruise ship doctor

was derailed by the COVID-19 pandemic and after introspect in the first week of lockdown, he made the decision to volunteer at his former place of employment, Worcester Hospital.

“Once Lockdown had started, all plans that had been made to resume work were thrown out the window. The summation of how I perceived the pandemic during the initial stages could best be described as unpredictable. After having worked in both the state and private sector in South African healthcare, as well as abroad, a



realisation came to mind: In a country whose healthcare system has always been under pressure, it was going to be very difficult to squeeze more hard work out of people where everyone has already been giving 110% to begin with,” says Dr Naidoo. After having visited a few colleagues at the hospital and hearing how busy things were getting, he decided to offer his support.

“The decision to volunteer to help out was a relatively easy one to make for a few reasons: After having trained my whole career for this kind of situation, I wouldn’t have been able to sit at home during lockdown knowing that I could make a small difference. I’ve always

enjoyed being part of the action and it was predicted that there was a lot of action to come.”

“Dr Sashen Naidoo made himself available as a volunteer to help Worcester Hospital during the COVID-19 outbreak. He has been delivering an excellent and selfless service. He has helped in the Emergency Centre, Intensive Care Unit and in the COVID-19 wards. We are extremely grateful for his generous and unselfish service delivery. He is an excellent clinician and a wonderful team member to have on board,” says Elbie Vosloo, CEO of Worcester Hospital.

Dr Naidoo says that in the initial phases of the pandemic, there was very little evidence-based knowledge of how to approach dealing with COVID-19 from multiple facets. The challenge of something new and unknown has also been incredibly stimulating for him and a driving factor to keep learning, evolving and staying in tune with how things progress. He finds the best place to learn is in the clinical setting and what better place is there than in the trenches at the forefront.

“COVID-19 has definitely improved our practise by improving our awareness of respiratory illness, its spread and the meticulousness one needs to apply when confronted with it. I think this can only be a positive learning experience going forward.”

Even though the number of positive

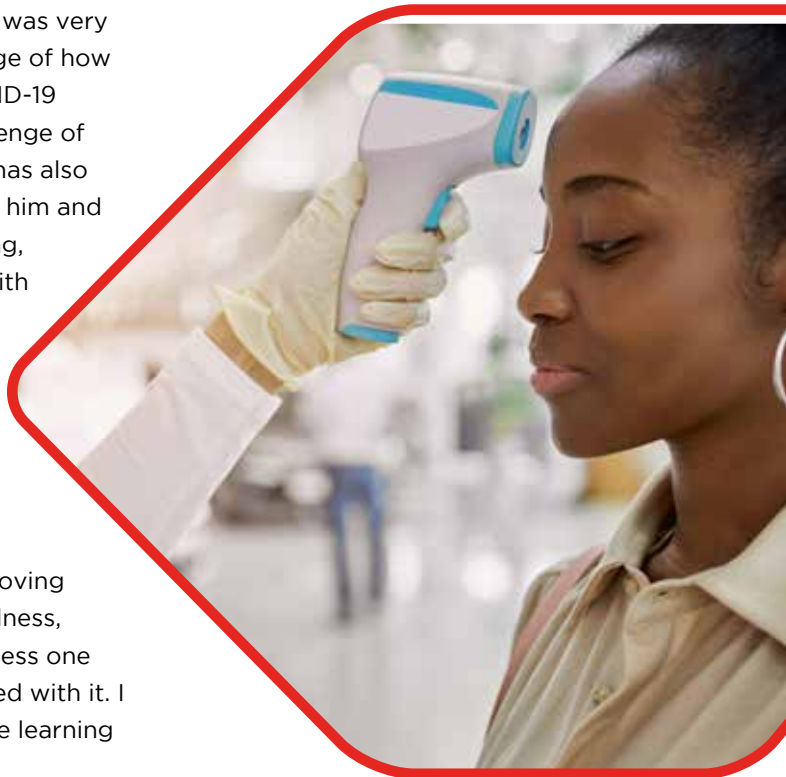


cases in the Western Cape and the Cape Winelands has declined, Dr Naidoo emphasizes that we must be extra careful now to ensure we do not see future increases of Covid-19 infections.

“There needs to be an acceptance of responsibility to protect and care others around us. Wear your mask at all times when you leave your house, keep your distance from others, and wash your hands often,” explains Dr Naidoo.

When asked if he would recommend volunteering to any of his peers in the health sector, Dr Naidoo replies with an ‘Emphatically yes!’.

“Working without a monetary motivator enables you to truly evaluate what you love and enjoy about your work. Everything is a lot simpler and less stressful as a result.”





## “Covid-19 At Work Was Like An Action Movie” - Vincent Rossouw

**V**incent Rossouw, Head of Department for Support Services at Groote Schuur Hospital (GSH) has worked at the hospital for the past 37 years. And as the Head of Department, he has 1 054 employees at the hospital whom he has to manage. “The purpose of Support Services is to support service delivery, promote efficiency and continually improve the delivery of health care in a safe and healthy way. In this case here at Groote Schuur Hospital, it is the patient [who comes first] and we as the support staff must ensure that we fulfil this mandate,” is how Vincent describes leading a department which includes Environmental Hygiene Services, Facilities Management, Linen Management and

Food Services.

“During December 2019, I heard about COVID-19 on television and I told my son it will never come to us. Then a few months later it was here at Groote Schuur Hospital and we had to make sure we were prepared. Being part of the executive [management structure] meant I was part of the planning committee at the hospital. Our team is well led by the Chief Executive Officer, Dr Bhavna Patel. We met daily to make sure we had plans in place not just for all our patients but also for our staff,” recalls Vincent.

There had to be different initiatives implemented and Vincent names a few, “We had a cleaning team in the different sections at the hospital to decontaminate areas, security [services] was expanded

to control entry [points] into the hospital since no visitors were allowed, more linen was needed because everyone was wearing scrubs in COVID-19 areas. In the food services department different plates were purchased. The Facilities Management assisted with Covid-19 markings and sanitising stations at the hospital. They were also involved with the planning and building of a new testing centre for COVID-19 testing.”

COVID-19 has taught all of us many lessons, and for Vincent it was that, “We can do more with less. There [are] so many unnecessary meetings. We pulled together and were able to work as a Groote Schuur Hospital family achieve our goals during the COVID-19 pandemic.”

During this extraordinary situation of COVID-19 we needed emotional mechanisms to make things easier. “When COVID-19 started everyone was nervous.

Staff were scared, and as the head of the department I had to calm [them]. I did it by being honest with them, engage with staff via WhatsApp and [through] managers so that they are updated with exactly what [was] happening at the hospital as far as Covid-19. They started to trust management and would share [their feelings] with them. Due to staff knowing more about COVID-19 and feeling safe they had no problem going to work in a COVID-19 ward. Personal Protective Equipment was available for staff. Emotional support was available from the Wellness team at the hospital for individual and group counselling.”

“COVID-19 is still with us and it’s important that people continue social distancing, wear [their] masks and keep it plain and simple when interacting with others,” added Vincent. “COVID-19 at work was like an action movie, with things moving very quickly, with the script changing daily, but you had to adapt,” is how Vincent summarised his COVID-19 experience at GSH.



## MAKING SAFER CHOICES

As we move forward, it is important that we make safe choices. Try to avoid possible super-spreader events:



**Crowded places**




**Close-contact settings**



**Confined and enclosed spaces**

STAY SAFE  
**MOVE FORWARD**





# “Living With A Mental Illness During The Covid-19 Pandemic Is Stressful And Challenging”

**W**hen 59-year-old Brian Arendse and his family tested positive for COVID-19, it brought feelings of shock, anxiety and fear. During this pandemic, many people can relate to this family’s emotions, but for the Arendse’s, these emotions were heightened and became a challenge as both Brian and his 38-year-old son suffer from mental illness.

“Living with a mental illness during the COVID-19 pandemic is stressful and challenging,” says Brian Arendse from Mitchells Plain.

Brian, who suffers from hypertension and severe depression, had himself tested

soon after his wife tested positive even though he was asymptomatic. Brian’s test result returned positive for COVID-19. He requested to have his son tested at the Lentegeur Clinic, but he did not fit the testing criteria at the time because of his age and health status and was asked to quarantine at home.

Having their adult son quarantine at home was a concern for the Arendse family as it was a challenge to have him safely quarantine at home due to his mental illness. The possibility of him leaving the house and infecting other people was high and Brian and his wife could not take the risk.

“My son belongs to the Department’s

mental health programme in Mitchells Plain and one of the health officials who manages the programme contacted me to find out how we were coping at home," recalls Brian.

"I told her our dilemma and the reason why we couldn't isolate at home with our son. She arranged for both my son and I to safely isolate at one of their isolation facilities in the Metro," says Brian relieved.

"My wife stayed at home to isolate and it gave her some time to relax and de-stress without worrying about our son," explains Brian.

"My son and I shared a room as I could not allow him to be on his own due to his mental condition. This was a lovely little retreat from life's everyday challenges," recalls Brian happily.

"We were monitored daily with a phone call to our room after every meal and we could request fresh bedding which was left at our room door," explains Brian

"Our stay was relaxing, and we were well taken care of by the staff. We bonded during our isolation period and had good conversations while overlooking the beach every day from our room window," says Brian.

"We exercised regularly in our room and my son started looking healthy again. Within the first five days I noticed the colour and light coming back to his face and eyes," recalls Brian joyfully. "

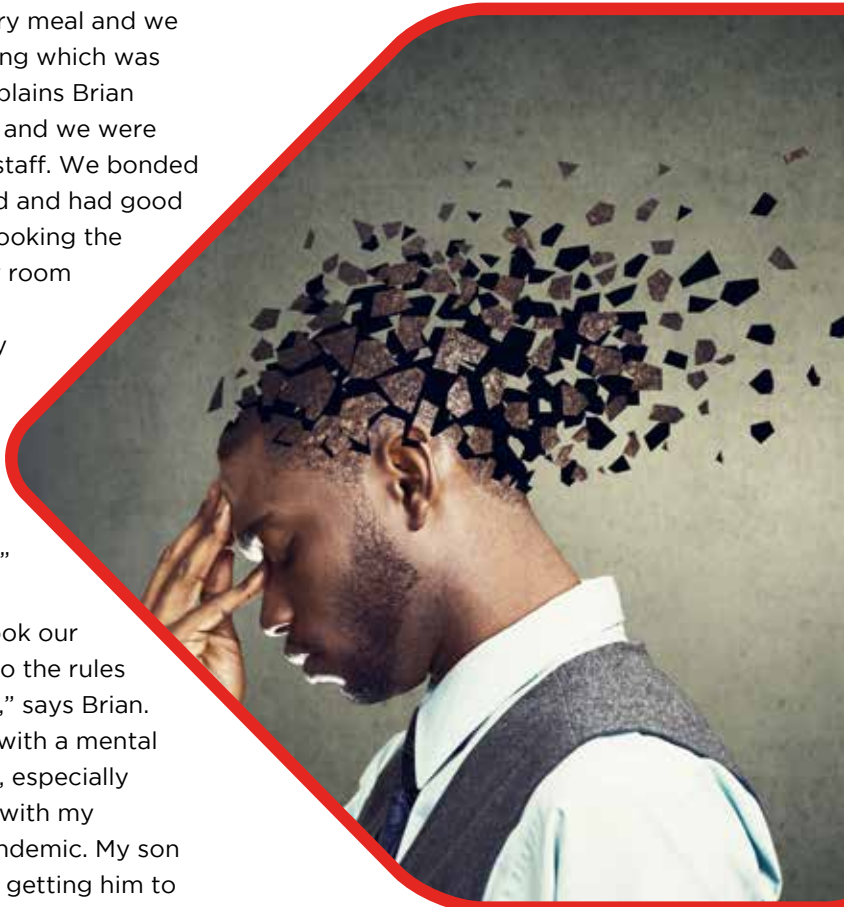
"I made sure that we took our medication and adhered to the rules while we were in isolation," says Brian.

"Taking care of a child with a mental illness is a huge challenge, especially when I am trying to cope with my depression during this pandemic. My son lives in his own world and getting him to

wear a mask is not easy. He would often put his mask in his pocket. Even though we preach hand hygiene and ensure that it is performed in our home, it is challenging to ensure he washes his hands often," explains Brian.

"He lives with us and we are fearful that he might come home and infect us again," said Brian. "If you suffer from a mental illness, then I encourage people to stay calm, take your medication, educate yourself about this virus and find ways or techniques to cope during this challenging time," says Brian.

The Arendse family are happy to be COVID-19 survivors and the Western Cape Department of Health has ensured that their son is back in the mental health programme after successfully completing quarantine.





## New Somerset Hospital's Operational Manager reflects

**T**he Orthopaedic/Medical Ward on 1st floor was the first ward to prepare for the COVID-19 admissions.

Our first patient arrived in the ward on the 24th of March as a transfer from ICU, as he was admitted with SOB in isolation. We were all geared up and ready, but also scared and anxious for the COVID positive patients. I remember in our pre-packs to dress ourselves, were 1 blue gown, 3 different masks, 1 blue apron and 4 single disposal gloves – PPE. We had a changing room (cubicle 1) for staff working with the patients.

We slowly started admitting COVID positive patients from EC, as well as PUI's. The ward filled quickly, not forgetting the

cubicles identified for patients with TB/MDR.

In preparation for admissions, we had to watch the different video's the IPC team put together to familiarise ourselves on what to do (quite a mission). We are a staff compliment of 30 staff members' day/night staff including cleaning staff.

As operational manager I had to do a lot of teaching, answer questions, make sure that the staff are not without PPE and alleviate the anxiety.

The allocation of beds: only 4 patients in 6 bed cubicles with space in between them as needed; influx of admissions we need to fill all 6 beds – adapt soon. I had loggerheads around beds with the CEO Dr Hendricks, but the bigger picture was seen

at last. The team at Somerset Hospital were very supportive, but at times also demanding which was understandable under the circumstances.

Towards end of May and June, we were nearly exhausted with minimal staff on duty - we coped. The daily pop in of doctors to ask how we are doing was very uplifting.

We as a staff put our own ward together on how to plan our day (observation, medication of the day, fixing). Ward was at full capacity since by this time all the cubicles were in use. The doctors that worked on our floor were great, they filled in the working schedule - Dr Huang, Dr Petersen, Dr Vallie, and Dr Steynhardt were the ones that were there majority of the time. Other interns were allocated to assist (also great bunch of people)

We identify our COVID positive patients with a sticker to ensure correct stats. The worst were the people who succumbed to the virus and not family member insight, the doctor had to share the news over the phone. We used our telephone to make phone calls to the family members. We monitored the patient's progress and encourage them all the time.

I personally could not be on top of it with mental health and COVID positive or PUI's. The one poster that made me and

the staff of Somerset feel valuable was the one that said 'Please stay at home...'

We mark 100 days in COVID-19. 1 staff member positive, 3 people tested negative and the rest have not gone for any testing nor had any symptoms. All glory to God.

In June - August we were in between full and a little bit less because by that time 5th floor was for the females and the 7th floor also opened as the need arises. The patient's transport home was the only link in the system that play up.

The pharmacy staff were excellent, we could phone, email or message them over WhatsApp and the stock would be delivered to our door.

The journey was tough but we all learned along the way. What an amazing team we had to work with from the colleagues in EC.

We salute everyone that played a role in the most vulnerable situation, but most of all the patients.

The Hi-Flo opened on 1st floor also a challenge but we learn and are still learning (2 patients successfully discharged home)

**Yours truly**

**Sr. VL. Julius**

**Operational Manager- 1st floor**

**New Somerset Hospital**

## We must take care of our general physical and mental health and wellness.



Keep up to date with health appointments.



Take chronic medication regularly.



Don't miss family vaccinations.



Eat healthy food and exercise.



**Overberg  
Doctor  
Jacques du  
Toit takes  
initiative  
with farm  
outreaches**





**A**s a medical manager, Dr du Toit has always been involved in his community. During the pandemic, Dr du Toit saw the need for a hands-on approach in this predominantly farming community, as they generally don't have access to the resources to obtain the latest COVID-19 information. Over the past four months, Dr du Toit has been educating farm workers and farm owners, shop owners, schools and members of the community on COVID-19; what it is, how it spreads, the precautions that need to be taken and how a positive case in the work place needs to be handled.

Being a medical manager of two sub-districts Dr du Toit could easily have delegated relevant staff members to complete necessary tasks but he actively became involved in all aspects of this pandemic he continuously assists business owners with determining close and casual contacts when a positive case is identified, moves onto farms with a quadbike to explain to farm workers how the process of quarantine and isolation will work should it be necessary, and also assists and advises non-profit organisations in the communities. When talking to Dr du Toit, he indicates that he has had an amazing team who has supported him and the community without end. His staff members have worked around the clock to offer support during the pandemic. In order to ensure they reach the most vulnerable groups Dr du Toit and his team visited the farm's pick up points very early in the mornings to screen the farm workers, educated them and ensure safety measures are being followed.

Gwendoline van der Westhuizen,  
Swellendam and Cape Agulhas PHC

manager says, "Dr du Toit is a no nonsense medical manager, he reiterates that we need to pay attention to detail and when looking back, that is what has brought us this far. He always gone the extra mile, he has not taken any time off and even worked over weekends where needed."

Recently the Swellendam Sub-district has seen a decrease in the amount of new positive cases and cases that need to be hospitalised. Dr du Toit says the major decrease in active cases in the Swellendam Sub-district is owed to the whole of society approach which the Sub-district has adopted. Each stakeholder/department have actively played their role in helping the members of their community during this pandemic. Dr du Toit is appreciative of his team and says this result would only have been possible with everyone's cooperation. "You can't beat this thing if you try to do it on your own, a hands-on approach and teamwork is very important," explains Dr Du Toit.



# Red Cross Children's Hospital Using Covid-19 Learnings To Plan Ahead

**D**r Matodzi Mukosi, Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital (RCWMCH) CEO, says the generous donations the hospital has received have enabled the facility to



provide healthcare workers with the necessary

protective equipment and also offer support to the patients and families with much needed resources such as food parcels and other necessities.

“We really value the support we are receiving from all the Good Samaritans in our communities who are making generous contributions to assist us in our response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are also thankful to the Children's Hospital Trust and the Hospital Facilities Board

who receive donations on behalf of our hospital. We are thankful to the Children's Hospital Trust for agreeing to take over some of the programmes that were previously managed by the Friends of the Children's Hospital Association (FOCHA),” says Dr Mukosi.

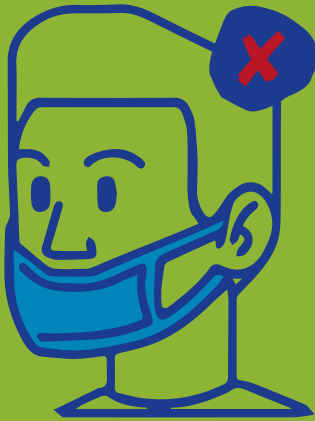
“We have learnt a lot of lessons during the time of COVID, and are now using some of the lessons learnt to improve our services going forward,” said Dr Anita Parbhoo, Medical Manager at the facility.

“Volunteers play a valuable role in supporting the patient and augmenting their holistic care, especially here at Red Cross. The COVID pandemic has highlighted how we can improve our offering,” she continued. “In line with this, we will be restructuring our volunteer programme and relaunching it in early 2021.”

In future, if you would like to help the hospital through volunteering, please contact the Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital directly on 021 658 5196.

To support the Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital and their patients through their programs and infrastructure projects by donating financially, or in kind, contact the Children's Hospital Trust on 021 686 7860 or [CHTRUST@chtrust.org.za](mailto:CHTRUST@chtrust.org.za), or visit <https://www.childrenshospitaltrust.org.za> to find out how you can help improve the lives of patients.

# NOSE MEANS NO



A properly-worn mask won't just help to keep you safe, but also help us save jobs and grow our economy. Make sure yours covers your nose and your mouth.

**STAY SAFE**  
**MOVE FORWARD**



Western Cape  
Government

Health

Sick? Stay home and call **080 928 4102**  
or visit [www.westerncape.gov.za](http://www.westerncape.gov.za)

## THE VALUES:



### **Innovation**

To be open to new ideas and develop creative solutions to challenges in a resourceful way



### **Caring**

To care for those we serve and work with.



### **Competence**

The ability and capacity to do the job we were employed to do.



### **Accountability**

We take responsibility.



### **Integrity**

To be honest and do the right thing.



### **Responsiveness**

To serve the needs of our citizens and employees.



### **Respect**

To be respectful to those we serve and work with.

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## THE VISION:



### **Internal Vision**

We are committed to the provision of  
“Access to Person-Centred Quality Care”



### **External Vision**

Open opportunity for all.



### **Better Together**

The Western Cape Government has a duty to provide opportunities.  
Citizens have the responsibility to make use of them.



Western Cape  
Government

Health

**BETTER TOGETHER.**