



EzaseKhangela

NEWS

October 2024

PRIORITIZING MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

On October 28, 2024, Victoria Mxenge Hospital held Mental Health Awareness Program hosted by the Social Work Department, in collaboration with Dietetics, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, and Speech Therapy departments. The event took place in the Jubilee Hall from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm, drawing in staff from across departments. Directed by Sabelisiwe Ndlovu, PRO Intern, the program aimed to provide resources, education, and support for mental well-being in the workplace.

The event began with an opening prayer led by Sr. Moran, setting a thoughtful and inclusive tone. The first speaker, Mrs. Rhona Chetty, an Employee Assistance Practitioner (EAP) from Wentworth Hospital with 35 years of social work experience, shared her inspiring journey. She emphasized the importance of self-care and managing burnout, advocating for mindfulness as a tool to maintain mental resilience. Mrs. Chetty explored the stages of burnout and closed her speech with a "mental health toolkit," offering attendees practical tips for self-assessment and well-being. Her segment concluded with a Q&A session, engaging

the audience in meaningful dialogue.

Sabelisiwe Ndlovu took the stage next, sharing a personal testimony that underscored the day's theme and encouraged open discussion about mental health. This set the stage for Miss Nondumiso Vilakazi, VMH's own EAP (acting), who highlighted the



role of the EAP program and its services. She underscored the significance of prioritizing mental health, especially at work, and reintroduced the Department of Health's "Work and Play" initiative, which includes leisure time activities like the Isicathamiya group, Choir, and aerobics every Tuesday and Thursday from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm.

Representatives Brendan and Nemita from Physiotherapy spoke about the physical impact of stress and how neglecting mental health affects the body. They

demonstrated techniques to release tension and promote relaxation. Minenhle and Vinolia from Occupational Therapy then discussed achieving wellness in the workplace, finding occupational balance and the risks of an unbalanced work-life routine.

The first half concluded with Mr. Zondi, Social Work Manager, giving a vote of thanks and leading into the day's second segment, which featured department stalls with various activities. Social Work and EAP provided wellness pamphlets and motivational tokens, Dietetics promoted healthy living and nutrition and Physiotherapy offered exercises to enhance physical and mental wellness. Speech Therapy engaged attendees with brain-stimulating word searches and puzzles, while Occupational Therapy brought a relaxing "sip and paint" station, creating a space for therapeutic conversation.

The event was met with enthusiasm and appreciation from staff, who enjoyed the interactive sessions and meaningful takeaways. Thanks go to Mrs. Rhona Chetty, Ms. Nondumiso Vilakazi, Mr. Bheki Zondi, and Sabelisiwe Ndlovu for their dedication and effort in advocating for mental health at Victoria Mxenge Hospital.

INTERNAL MEDICINE HOSTS ARTHRITIS AWARENESS



Internal Medicine and Specialist Clinic hosted its inaugural Arthritis Awareness Day on Friday, 18 October 2024. The event, which aimed to raise awareness about arthritis and promote the importance of movement in managing the condition, saw collaboration with the Physiotherapy Department and was held in the Follow-up Clinic's waiting area. The lively atmosphere was set by upbeat music and decorations in the traditional pink and purple colors, creating a vibrant and educational morning for both staff and patients.

The programme, led by Dr. Ryan Sewpersadh, highlighted personal experiences from both staff and patients. Nobuhle Mkhize, a 24-year-old patient who has been living with Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (JIA), shared her journey of resilience and determination. Her story provided inspiration for many in the audience, especially younger patients who may be struggling with similar challenges. Sr Mpfana, a healthcare worker and arthritis patient, engaged attendees with her experience managing arthritis while working in healthcare, showcasing her

remarkable joint flexibility and offering hope to fellow arthritis sufferers.

A key presentation was delivered by Dr. Farhanah Paruk, a renowned Rheumatologist and former specialist at VMH. Her talk was on different types of arthritis, how to recognize warning signs and when to seek professional help. She also provided valuable tips on maintaining bone health. For staff, Dr. Paruk led an informative session on investigating and managing inflammatory arthritis, which further empowered the clinic team in their daily care of patients with



arthritis.

The Physiotherapy Department played an essential role in the event, offering live demonstrations of exercises and stretches aimed at preserving joint related issues. These practical activities were met with great enthusiasm, as patients learned how to incorporate these movements into their daily routines. The team also highlighted the benefits of using assistive devices, ensuring patients understand how to protect their joints in their day-to-day lives.

This successful event marks the beginning of an exciting new tradition for the clinic, with plans to make Arthritis Awareness a permanent feature on the Health Calendar. The event not only highlighted the importance of early diagnosis and active management of arthritis but also brought together patients, healthcare workers, and the broader community in a shared mission to improve joint health and quality of life for those affected by arthritis.

Key Facts about Arthritis:

- Arthritis affects over 350 million people globally, with osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis being the most common types.
- Early diagnosis is crucial to prevent long-term joint damage.
- Regular movement and exercise, combined with medication, can help manage symptoms and

improve joint function.

Upcoming Events:

- Stay tuned for more Health Awareness Days at the clinic, focusing on a variety of conditions from bone health to chronic diseases management.

A big thank you goes out to all the staff and volunteers who made the day a success, as well as to everyone involved in the care and support of patients with arthritis and bone disease. Together, we're making a difference!

VMH HOSTS DISTRICT CHOIR COMPETITION

Friday, the 18th of October, saw Choir Competition hosted by Victoria Mxenge Hospital (VMH) at Jubilee Hall. The event, which started at 9 AM, featured three competing choirs: Victoria Mxenge Hospital, Hillcrest Hospital, and a combined choir from Wentworth and Ekuhlengeni Hospitals.

Each choir, led by their



conductors with precision and discipline, delighted the audience with their melodic performances across various categories. The event drew a significant crowd of music lovers from the hospital and beyond, creating an electric atmosphere filled with support and anticipation.

Hillcrest Hospital, led by conductor Mr. Muzi Shongwe, was the first to take the stage, performing a captivating Western Piece that set a high standard for the competition. The combined Wentworth and Ekuhlengeni choir followed suit, delivering a solid performance.

The competition categories included:

- Western Piece
- African Piece
- Jingle
- Double Mix Quartet

Choirs performed across all categories, pushing their abilities to the limit. A skilled pianist accompanied the groups, ensuring every note and rhythm aligned seamlessly with the conductors' direction

Dr. Sibongiseni Sigwaza, serving as the master of ceremonies, kept the audience entertained throughout the event. Among the distinguished attendees were sponsors like Metropolitan, who provided financial advisors for the audience, and Volkswagen Hoopers, who showcased their trendy, affordable vehicles outside the hall.



Victoria Mxenge Hospital, led by conductors Ms. Tholakele Sabela and Mr. Skhumbuzo Gcaba, stole the show during the Jingle category. Their health education song on safe sex and healthy living, enhanced with traditional attire and catchy melodies, won over the crowd. The combined choir, conducted by Mr. Zolisa

Majali, concluded the Jingle category with an equally impressive performance.

The event was a resounding success, with Ms. Nontethlelo Maphumulo, Deputy Director of Human Resources Management Services: Monitoring and Evaluation (eThekweni District), delivering the vote of thanks. She expressed gratitude to the team behind the event's organization, the enthusiastic audience and the participants for their excellent performances. Ms. Maphumulo also encouraged more hospitals to participate in the future to grow the competition and provide a creative outlet for music lovers within the healthcare community. Key individuals behind the event's success included Mr. Bheki Zondi (VMH Social Work Manager), Miss Nondumiso Vilakazi (VMH E.A.P.), Mr. Mondli Phewa (VMH Acting HR Manager), and Mr. Xolani Cele (VMH HR Officer).

The award ceremony was hosted by a panel of esteemed judges, including Mr. Zondi from VMH, Ms. Nonzwakazi Ngcobo from IALCH, and Ms. Maphumulo representing the District. Victoria Mxenge Hospital was awarded Best Indigenous Dressed and also claimed the Iscathamiya trophy. The other choirs were also honored with trophies for their outstanding performances.

Overall, the competition was a grand success, and anticipation is high for next year's event, with hopes that more hospitals will join in and continue this unique tradition.

WORLD BONE AND JOINT AWARENESS

On October 17, the Orthopedics Department at Victoria Mxenge Hospital held a highly informative World Bone and Joint Awareness session at 10:00 am in the OOPD Conference Room, led by Dr. Mabaso. This session, targeting VMH staff—particularly those in clinical roles—was part of a broader awareness week from October 12-20, spearheaded by Mrs. Zuma in close collaboration with dedicated hospital personnel. The event marked an important step toward continuous education, supporting the hospital's mission to enhance patient care



through informed staff.

Dr. Mabaso delivered a comprehensive overview of osteoarthritis, beginning with the distinction between unmodifiable and modifiable risk factors. He explained the pathophysiology of the disease, detailing the balance (and often imbalance) between cartilage repair and cartilage degeneration. His discussion on diagnosis highlighted specific signs, including osteophytes, sclerosis, joint

space narrowing, and cysts.

In discussing treatment approaches, Dr. Mabaso emphasized lifestyle modifications, such as weight



loss, physical activity, and assistive devices, along with general education on managing osteoarthritis. He further discussed pharmacological options, including analgesics, steroids, and PRP/Synvisc injections and highlighted surgical

solutions such as arthroscopy and corrective osteotomy.

Dr. Mabaso also covered red flags in lower back pain (LBA) that necessitate urgent medical attention, including a history of cancer, saddle anesthesia, unexplained weight loss, progressive neurological symptoms, fever, night pain, trauma, and bladder or bowel involvement. His presentation on the causes of back pain provided a dual perspective, distinguishing between orthopedic (e.g., spondylosis, inflammatory conditions like ankylosing spondylitis, trauma, tumors, misalignment, obesity, and occupational factors) and non-orthopedic causes (e.g., acute pancreatitis, pyelonephritis, pelvic inflammatory disease, and dysmenorrhea).

The session concluded with an exploration of spondylosis and its impact on joint and spine health. Attendees gained invaluable insights and practical information, leaving the session better equipped to apply this knowledge in their professional practice.



Overall, the World Bone and Joint Awareness session was a resounding success, serving as a key milestone in fostering continuous education at VMH. Many thanks to Dr. Mabaso for his expertise and to Mrs. Zuma for her leadership throughout the awareness week, as well as to all staff involved for their commitment to enhancing clinical knowledge and patient care at Victoria Mxenge

Hospital.

VICTORIA MXENGE HOSPITAL REINTRODUCES MRI SERVICES AFTER A DECADE



After nearly a decade without MRI services, Victoria Mxenge Hospital is proud to announce the reintroduction of MRI scanning with a brand-new machine. This significant milestone follows years of referring patients to Albert Luthuli Central Hospital for MRI scans, resulting in long waiting periods for diagnosis and treatment. The new MRI machine promises to improve patient care, shorten waiting times and enhance the hospital's diagnostic capabilities.

Mrs. Dlamini, Acting DD Radiology, expressed her gratitude for the support from senior management and stakeholders during the decommissioning and commissioning process. She shared her relief that the hospital has finally reached the stage of MRI functionality. "It's a privilege for the existing radiology staff to have access to this advanced imaging technology, which will significantly aid in diagnosing conditions like tumors, multiple sclerosis and joint injuries," she said.

MRI is known for providing highly detailed images of soft tissues and detecting early signs of cancer and other inflammatory diseases. Unlike CT scans and X-rays, which use ionizing radiation, MRI uses a strong magnetic field, making it a safer option for certain types of imaging. However, Mrs. Dlamini highlighted the challenges they face, including the need for more staff, improved facilities and specialized training for MRI operators. She also noted that filling key vacancies, such as the Assistant Director post, remains a top priority.



Mr. Ntuli: Chief Radiographer

Mr. Ntuli, MRI Chief Radiographer, explained the differences in training between MRI, CT scans, and X-rays. MRI training is more complex due to the use of a magnetic field instead of radiation, requiring radiographers to be extra vigilant about safety. "We ensure that all personnel entering the MRI environment are thoroughly screened for safety," he said. While radiographers handle both MRI and CT, the complexity of MRI demands specialized knowledge and precision.

Mrs. Dlamini emphasized the long-term goals of the department, including continued staff training and filling vacant posts to meet the demands of the growing workload. She is optimistic about the future of the department and looks forward to further advancements with the support of senior management.

With the new MRI machine now operational, Victoria Mxenge Hospital is better equipped to provide timely and accurate diagnoses, ensuring improved patient outcomes and the continued growth of the radiology department.



REVITALIZING NUCLEAR MEDICINE SERVICES

Driven by a passion for improving patient outcomes and enhancing quality of life, Dr. L. Gabela found inspiration in Nuclear Medicine's potential for precise diagnosis and targeted therapies. With expertise in cutting-edge technology like PET/CT and SPECT/CT, Dr. L. Gabela's journey led to joining Victoria Mxenge Hospital, where a commitment to innovation and patient care is paramount.

A New Era in Nuclear Medicine at VMH

As one of the pioneering doctors in the recently revived Nuclear Medicine department, Dr. Gabela feels honored to reintroduce this critical service. "It's a privilege to contribute to a field that will have a significant impact on patient care," Dr. Gabela shared, while acknowledging the medical management for establishing this crucial position.

Overcoming Challenges with Education and Awareness

One of the challenges Dr. Gabela anticipates is limited awareness of Nuclear Medicine's offerings among both patients and healthcare professionals. Through regular outreach and educational sessions, Dr. Gabela aims to increase understanding and trust in the field's diagnostic and therapeutic benefits.

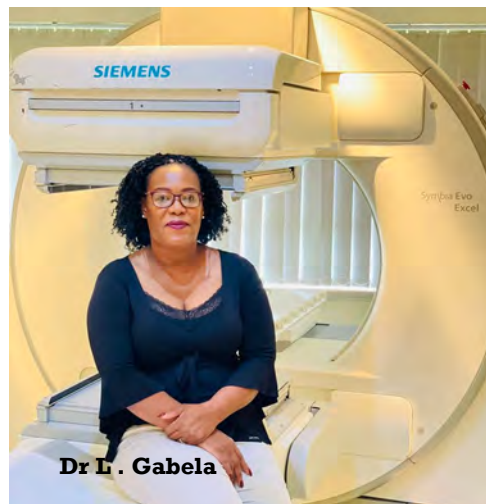
Bringing Advanced Healthcare to the Community

Nuclear Medicine at Victoria Mxenge Hospital will provide

the community with comprehensive healthcare solutions, aligning with the hospital's goals of high-quality care, accurate patient management, and enhanced diagnostic precision. This department will directly contribute to better patient outcomes and community well-being.

Expanding Diagnostic Capabilities

The department's state-of-the-art SPECT/CT machine enables a



variety of diagnostic scans, such as MUGA scans for heart function, bone scans for detecting abnormalities, and parathyroid scans to evaluate gland function, among others. These services ensure that patients receive optimal care for a wide range of medical conditions.

Exciting Advancements: Beta and Alpha Therapies

Dr. Gabela is particularly excited about advancements in Beta and Alpha therapies—targeted radionuclide therapies that focus radiation on diseased cells, sparing healthy tissue. This innovative approach is

transforming cancer treatment, and Dr. Gabela plans to integrate these therapies into the hospital's protocol.

Building a Team and Ensuring Excellence

To ensure smooth operation and top-quality care, Dr. Gabela emphasizes the importance of timely reporting, a strong quality management framework and regular quality assurance checks. Plans include recruiting a skilled, multidisciplinary team and fostering collaboration between specialists, including radiologists, oncologists, and surgeons.

Advice for Aspiring Professionals

For medical students considering Nuclear Medicine, Doctor encourages embracing the field's combination of advanced technology and patient-centered care. With opportunities for innovation and impact, young professionals who pursue Nuclear Medicine will find a fulfilling, evolving career path.

Vision for the Future

Long-term goals include acquiring a PET/CT machine, achieving HPCSA accreditation as a training site, and expanding therapeutic services for prostate, neuroendocrine, and thyroid cancers. These advancements will elevate the department's capabilities, positioning Victoria Mxenge Hospital as a leader in Nuclear Medicine.

As Dr. R. Gabela leads this transformative journey, the future of Nuclear Medicine at Victoria Mxenge Hospital shines bright, promising enhanced patient care and cutting-edge treatment options for the community.

RIGHT TO CARE IS HAND IN GLOVE WITH ST AIDANS HOSPITAL

Right To Care is a non-governmental organization providing a comprehensive VMMC (Voluntary Medical Male Circumcision) service that includes clinical care, demand creation, capacity building, and support to enhance government healthcare efforts. This organization is based at Victoria Mxenge Hospital (St Aidan's Complex) and has been providing services to the government for several years across multiple districts. Right To Care's primary role is to complement the Department of Health's (DoH) initiatives by increasing access to safe VMMC services, conducting outreach campaigns, and strengthening infection prevention control (IPC) practices and overall service quality at healthcare facilities.

During an interview with Ms Thembelihle Zuma (Demand Creation Officer), she stated that their experience has been one of collaborative partnership, where they work closely with local healthcare teams, traditional leaderscommunity

stakeholders. The collaboration has allowed them to overcome challenges such as resource constraints, stakeholder engagement, and mobilization in diverse communities.

Right to Care adheres to strict

channels such as school engagements, community dialogues, and media campaigns.

Pre-counselling and health education - conducted by trained healthcare professionals before undergoing the procedure which .

Post-procedure care - includes follow-up visits to ensure proper healing, and clients are given guidance on aftercare and infection prevention.

Ms Zuma mentioned that their organization have a CQI (Continuous Quality Improvement) team that conduct routine audits and quality assessments to ensure high standards, and work with external partners to evaluate their service delivery.

Feedback from clients and healthcare workers is used to inform quality improvement efforts. options for the community.



data protection protocols such as the POPIA (Protection of Personal Information Act) to ensure that all patients' information remains confidential.

The process of the VMMC: Demand Creation - communities are informed and mobilized for VMMC services through various

Photo gallery



Photo gallery



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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