

HEALTHUSULLETIN

JULY 2022

KZN HEALTH MEC'S PLEA TO MEN -

PUT BRAVADO ASIDE, COME FORWARD AND SEEK HEALTHCARE TO AVOID PREMATURE DEATH.

DON'T "CHANGE" YOUR AILMENT BASED ON WHO'S ATTENDING TO YOU AT A HEALTH FACILITY.

THE DEPARTMENT WILL ALLOCATE MALE NURSES AT CLINICS, CHCs AND HOSPITALS TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR MEN TO BE HONEST ABOUT WHAT'S BOTHERING THEM.

KwaZulu-Natal Health MEC Ms
Nomagugu Simelane has urged
men to put their pride aside and
realise that seeking medical help is
not a sign of being "too soft", but
can enable early detection of
diseases and prevent premature
and unnecessary death.

MEC Simelane is also cautioning against the dangers of men relying on their wives and girlfriends' medical results as an indicator that they're safe from diseases, and insists that the most accurate approach is for each individual to get tested, so that they know for sure where they stand as far as their health is concerned.

And, to make it easier for men to

And, to make it easier for men to speak more openly about diseases that plague them, the MEC has

re-iterated that the Department will allocate male nurses to clinics, community health centres and hospitals, "so that a person with a sexually-transmitted infection or symptoms of prostate cancer doesn't suddenly say they're suffering from a headache, just because they're being attended to by a young female nurse."

The MEC was speaking on her Department's weekly KZN Health

Chat.Gov multimedia programme_ earlier this month, as the Province continues to observe Men's Month throughout July. MEC Simelane said: "Yes, the Department caters for the health needs of everybody in society.

But in the course of what we do, it has become clear that there are certain population groups, such as the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex

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(LGBTQI+) group that need to be treated in a special way. Men, as a population group, also need our specific focus because their attitude towards their own health, and towards the healthcare system... is concerning.

"For us, finding men proved to be such a challenge that Government had to establish a programme dedicated to finding men and bringing them to healthcare facilities. Generally, men only come forward when they're too sick. "It is such a problem in our society that we've even come to accept that, in any family, the man is the one who must die first.

When married couples reach 80 or 90 years of age, it is regarded as an anomaly, which shouldn't be the case. It is not natural that men must die early. It is precisely because when men are sick, they do not come to our clinic... to the doctor, or to the hospital.

"When a man has an eye problem... firstly he will not speak up. Not because he's not in pain, but he does not want to go to a nurse and explain, and thinks that's a waste of time. Men, unlike women, persevere until it's too late. And by the time they present at a healthcare facility, their ailment has been prolonged and it is too late for them to get help.

"Some men don't go to the clinic because they don't want to leave their drinking buddies behind. Some think going to hospital is an indictment on their masculinity. They think it's a sign that they're not 'real' men, because real men are not supposed to feel pain. They look at 'what society will say.'

"We want men to realise that we take them seriously, and to know that there's nothing wrong with being a man who goes to hospital when you're sick. It doesn't mean you're 'too soft' too you're not a _kleva_." The MEC says it is not uncommon among many couples that a woman will go and get tested for a myriad ailments, such as COVID-19, HIV and diabetes, and when they come back with a clean bill of health, the man will say, "Since you've been cleared, it means I'm also fine," forgetting that a person's health condition is their own, and does not necessarily reflect on anyone else.

"Each and every person must test for themselves. When you talk to men, they'll say, 'why must I get tested for HIV because the woman of this house always gets tested.' But this is not advisable because some couples are sero-discordant (one partner may be HIV negative, with the other is HIV positive)."

In keeping with MEC Simelane's

announcement when she delivered her Budget Speech in May 2022, the Department is forging ahead with plans to make its facilities more "Men-Friendly." The initial target for the first phase of this project is to ensure that at least 80 healthcare facilities have a male nurse during the day and after hours, who is dedicated to men's unique health needs.

MEC Simelane said: "When we engage with men, especially the older ones during _Isibaya Samadoda_, one of the things they say is, 'I can't go to the local clinic because when I get there, I'll find my neighbour's daughter, or wife, who is a nurse. It then becomes difficult for me to tell them what I'm suffering from.'

This is why a person who might be having the symptoms of prostate cancer may end up saying he's suffering from a headache. They say, 'If there you had more male nurses, then we'd be able to speak out freely.' That is why we have started this initiative that will ultimately result in all our facilities having a male nurse.

"All in all, we encourage men to come forward and visit healthcare facilities... not only in July, but every day," said the MEC.



COVID-19 STATISTICS IN KZN

23 JULY 2022

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

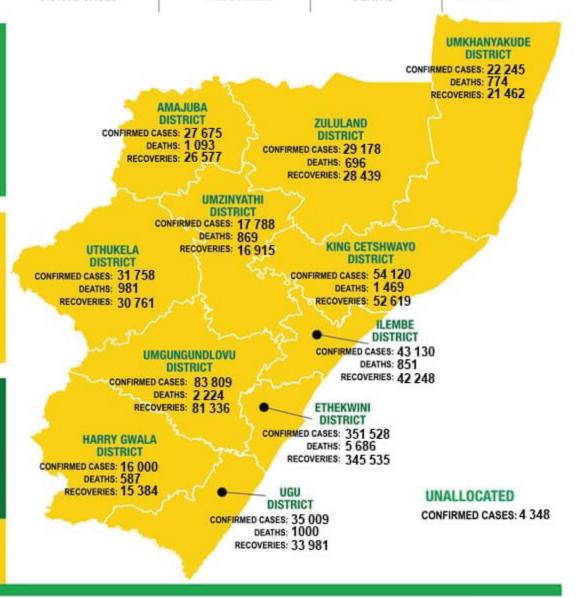
Covid-19 public hotline: 0800 029 999 WhatsApp 'Hi' to 0600 123 456

DOWNLOAD the COVID Alert SA app

The COVID Alert SA app can notify you if you have been exposed to another app user with coronavirus. Download it now to protect yourself and others































KZN HEALTH'S HEAD OFFICE HOSTS INFORMATIVE MEN'S FORUM:

MEN CHARTING A NEW PATH TOWARDS SELF REALISATION

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health's Employee Health and Wellness Directorate hosted a Men's Health commemoration programme to mark Men's Month at the Natalia Building (Head Office) in Pietermaritzburg.



Men's Health Month is a national programme that is used to raise awareness about healthcare for men and focus on encouraging males to take decisions that encourage and enable healthy living, such as exercising regularly and following a healthy and balanced diet.

Head Office hosted the programme earlier this month to celebrate honour and remind men that their issues are important and acknowledged.

"We wanted to extinguish the notion that men do not cry. Also create a safe platform for men to table their views and tackle the issues that often do not get discussed, but are ignored as a result of the expectation that men are 'strong'," says Dr Nokuthula Dlamini, who is the Director of the Departments Employee and Wellness program.

Men were encouraged to be proactive about their health and get screened or tested for diseases even if they have no symptoms. The event also focussed on other issues that men tend to suffer from but aren't always to cope with, such as sexual dysfunction, anger management and positive dispute resolution. The day's proceedings also drew attendance from experts from different fields to tackle a myriad of issues that men are grappling with.

Mr Zain Khan, from The Association Saving Investment South Africa (ASISA) foundation, focused on financial issues, and covered the topics including but not limited to,

- Finances and mental health,
- The impact of the cost of credit,
- Tow to overcome over-indebtedness

Marcia Peters, a clinical psychologist from Townhill Hospital, evaluates mental and emotional disorders of individuals and administers treatment programmes.

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GROWING KWAZULU-NATAL TOGETHER









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She spoke about how stress affects men, as well as the proven mechanisms they can utilise to cope, such as:

- Keeping a positive attitude.
- Accepting that there are events that you cannot control.
- Exercising

She also expressed concern that men generally were generally hesitant to visit healthcare facilities due to fear of being examined, and are also afraid to speak about their health problems.

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Rev Sigungu Shangase spoke about the importance of managing power dynamics between a man and woman within a home setting, meaning both partners needs to feel that their emotional needs are being met. "It is vital to keep communication lines open, because both men and women have the ability to speak their minds.

It is also crucial that decisions within a family setting be made jointly at all times, and should be based on a strong foundation of mutual respect."



57 PATIENTS CIRCUMCISED IN ONE DAY, SCORES MANY MORE TREATED AS "ISIBHEDLELA KUBANTU" PROGRAMME SWEEPS THROUGH PONGOLA RURAL COMMUNITY

An exciting and innovative community-based primary healthcare programme has left scores of needy rural residents satisfied - with a whopping 57 men and boys circumcised in one day.

The latest instalment of "Isibhedlela Kubantu" programme, held at the Belgrade Sports field in Pongola this month, was a sight to behold as it attended to the healthcare needs of almost 300 community members yesterday.

With rows of mobile health units parked in horseshoe formation KZN, offering a wide range of health services, KwaZulu-Natal Health MEC Nomagugu Simelane was also on hand to address the hundreds of young people who had gathered. They had come to hear more about





for TB.

the benefits of the HIV-protection pill known as Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) and how they can contribute to the creation of an HIV-Free Generation.

MEC Simelane started the programme by visiting local homes with a team of medical officials in tow. They vaccinated eligible people against COVID - 19 and educated them about different ailments.

In keeping with the objective of the programme, the day's statistics read like the register of a clinic.

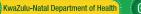
Overall, 289 people were attended in just a few hours, with 279 screened

A dozen (12) patients were screened for Prostate Cancer; 54 underwent a Pap smear (to test for cervical

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cancer), while four were initiated on the HIV-protection pill known as Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis. No fewer than 63 patients were seen by a medical officer (doctor), while 182 were attended to by professional nurses, with 40 being seen by a physiotherapist.

At least 188 patients were checked up by an optometrist, with eight receiving glasses. A number of geriatrics received walking sticks, while five women were initiated on

birth control. Ten other people had their teeth extracted. Twenty-seven were vaccinated against COVID - 19, while one tested positive for HIV/-AIDS and was counselled and initiated on Anti-Retroviral Treatment. A further 21 patients were referred to hospital.

Reflecting on events of the day, MEC Simelane said: "We are extremely pleased to have brought these services to the local community. This is what Primary Healthcare is about.

We want to encourage people to prevent diseases and get used to the idea of getting screened and tested for diseases, so that they can be picked up early, making it easier for them to be treated or managed.

We are very happy with the turnout, especially because all of these are patients who would have ordinarily had to walk a long distance to visit healthcare facilities, but they are here and happy to receive medical attention right on their doorstep."











GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING

MENTAL ILLNESS

July is also known as Mental Health Awareness Month. The KZN Mental Health and Substance Abuse unit gives you the lowdown on all you need to know about this largely misunderstood condition.



Mental illnesses are a wide variety of conditions which affect the way a person may feel and think. These illnesses can also affect a person's ability to get through day-to-day life.

Mental illnesses can be caused by several different factors:

- Biological factors a person's genes or brain chemistry.
- Life experiences such as physical or psychological trauma or abuse.
- Family history of mental health problems.
- Environment daily stresses, work stress, family stress, financial stress.
- Habits substance use, busy lifestyles.

Common illness (Even those linked to mental illness)

Major depressive disorder (MDD): causes feelings of extreme sadness or hopelessness that lasts for at least two weeks.

It affects appetite, sleep, energy,

concentration and memory.

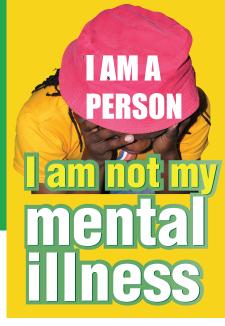
People may become so upset about their lives that they think about or try to commit suicide.

Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD): goes beyond regular everyday anxiety or stress. It causes a person to become extremely worried about many things, even when there's little or no reason to worry. Sometimes worrying can keep people with GAD from accomplishing everyday tasks and chores.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD): is a mental illness that's triggered after experiencing or witnessing a traumatic event. Symptoms of PTSD may include flashbacks, reliving the event, avoiding any memories and being easily startled or on edge.

Substance Abuse/Addiction: cause a person to continue to use substances despite the negative effects that it is having on their lives. They may use substances even in dangerous situations like driving or while at work/ caring for children. The need for the substance has taken control of their lives.

Social anxiety disorder, sometimes called social phobia, causes an extreme fear of social situations.



People with social anxiety may become very nervous about being around other people. They may feel like they're being judged.

Affects performance in school and work

Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) causes constant and repetitive thoughts, or obsessions. These thoughts happen with unnecessary and unreasonable desires to carry out certain behaviors, or compulsions. Many people with OCD realize that their thoughts and actions are unreasonable, yet they cannot stop them.

Eating disorders cause's people to have constant fear and anxiety around food. They may have an altered body image, purge/vomit/ exercise intensely to avoid getting fat. On the other extreme they may eat excessively as a coping mechanism for emotional stress.

Bipolar disorder is a chronic mental illness that affects about 2 -3% of

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people. It is characterized by episodes of energetic, manic highs and extreme, depressive lows. These can affect a person's energy level and ability to think reasonably. Mood swings caused by bipolar disorder are much more severe than the small ups and downs most people experience on a daily basis.

Schizophrenia impairs a person's perception of reality and the world around them. It interferes with their connection to other people. It's a serious condition that needs treatment. They might experience hallucinations, have delusions, and hear voices. These can potentially put them in a dangerous situation if left untreated. It's estimated that 1 % of the population experiences schizophrenia.

Symptoms to look out for

- Using alcohol or drugs to cope.
- Withdrawing from family and friends.
- Withdrawing from daily activities.
- Overworking.
- Blaming yourself or others.
- Neglecting your health and self-care such as sleep, hygiene or diet.

Home support systems available and those that can be implemented

- Keeping a positive attitude
- Staying physically active
- Helping other people and knowing when to say NO
- Getting enough sleep
- Eating a healthy diet
- Spending time on self-care
- Getting professional help if you need it
- Socializing with people whom you enjoy spending time with
- Forming and using effective coping skills
- Staying away from alcohol and drugs
- Talking about mental illness BEAT THE STIGMA

Clinical information & management of mental illness

- Treatment for mental health issues must be adhered to, to make sure that the mental health issue is under control.
- This will help clients live and work with their mental health issue.
- There are different ways that mental health issues can be treated.
- These can involve medication, individual therapy or counselling and different forms of support in the community, as well as people with the mental

- health issue helping themselves.
- How and when should medicines for mental health issues be taken? It is very important that medicines be taken as prescribed.
- Medication should not just be taken when you are not feeling well, but should be continued even if you are feeling well.
- Interrupting or stopping treatment can be dangerous and should be discussed with a doctor or nurse first.

List of medical care

- Life style changes
- Substance rehabilitation
- Medication
- Psychotherapy
- Social worker or occupational therapy interventions

List of psychiatric hospitals in the province

Visit your local clinic to be screened for mental illness (Primary Health Care Clinic or Community Health Centre) Mental health services can be accessed at District and Regional Hospitals across the province.

There are also a number of Specialised Psychiatric Hospitals in the Public Sector that offer various services namely:

Townhill
Madadeni
UMzimkhulu
King Dinuzulu Hospital
Ekuhlengeni Hospital
Umgeni Hospital
Fort Napier Hospital.







KZN Department of Health





Having trouble taking your medication?

Taking your chronic medication properly is an important part of looking after your health during this time.

If you are not taking the right dose of each medication at the right time every day...





... use these 3 steps to help you be adherent:

What stops you from taking your medication?

Maybe you.

- nayoe you ...
 Feel too stressed to care?
 Feel too stressed to care?
 Don't understand why you have to take it?
 Can't drink alcohol with medications?
 Are too scared to go and get refills because of COVID-19?

... anything else?

Think about ideas of what you can do

- Ask if you don't understand why you have to take your medications
- Get help to stop drinking
 Ask someone healthy to fetch the medication for you

... what else can you do?

Ask a **family member or buddy** to help you to do these things so that you can be healthy and strong.

Telling the nurse and get a referral for counselling and/or treatment

Tell the nurse if you:

- Don't understand
- Feel too tired and worried to care about taking medication
- Feel sick on the medication



Do you have little interest or pleasure in doing things?

Do you feel down, depressed or hopeless?

If YES, read on because you might have DEPRESSION

People who are depressed often:



- Find it hard to concentrate
- Have negative thoughts about the future
- Think about harming themselves or committing suicide



- Feel sad and worthless
- Feel hopeless about the future
- · Feel tearful
- ACT
- · Lose interest or pleasure in doing things
- Have problems with sleeping and/or eating Avoid contact with friends and/or family

Many of us experience depressive symptoms in our lives. COVID-19 can also make our life situations very difficult to manage during these challenging times.

Help yourself by:

Something you enjoy

Doing these things, like:



Talking to



Watching this video to manage your negative thoughts: https://youtu.be/knRwfr2JK_k

Calling SADAG a free counselling hotline

0800 4567 89 0800 7080 90 0800 2122 23 Telling the nurse and get a referral for counselling and/or treatment



Do you feel nervous, anxious or on edge? Do you find that you are not able to stop or control worrying?

If YES, read on because you might be suffering with ANXIETY

People with anxiety often:

- Worry about the same thing over and over again Doubt themselves a lot
 - Have poor concentration

FEEL

- Feel overwhelmed
- · Feel nervous/anxious
- Feel fearful about many things
- · Do things over and over even when there is no need to
- · Are irritable and/or restless

Many of us experience anxiety symptoms in our lives. Covid-19 has complicated everyday living and sometimes we might struggle to manage our anxiety during these difficult times.

Physical

Help yourself by:

Making contact with someone



Doing these things: Doing something

you enjoy



Practice breathing deeply

Experience muscle tension

Experience palpitations

· Have indigestion or runny tummy



Managing your negative thoughts by watching: https://youtu.be/knRwfr2JK_k

Calling SADAG a free counselling hotline:

0800 7080 90

0800 4567 89

Telling the nurse and get a referral for counselling and/or treatment

Remember, you can come through this most people do!



Loss & grief during Covid-19

When someone dies, it is normal to grieve, and now Covid-19 complicates the way we say goodbye ...

You may feel shaky, confused and helpless and you might say:



"No! This is not happening..."

"I should have taken better care of ..."



"I feel sad and alone"

ACT

"... I get cross with everyone ..."

Help yourself by:

Allowing selected visitors observing distancing



Seeking spiritual



Finding comfort through:

Connecting virtually (WhatsApp & Facebook) to observe rituals & share



Watching this video on grief and bereavement: https://youtu.be/O7YECGxJxn0



Calling SADAG a free counselling hotline 0800 4567 89 0800 7080 90

Telling the nurse and get a referral for counselling and/or treatment

Remember: in your own way and time, you can get through

0800 2122 23



Developed by MhINT and ASSET at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and the Knowledge Translation Unit, and sponsored by I-TECH.



KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health



kznhealth





ONLINE GYM: LET'S GET FIT FROM THE CONVENIENCE OF OUR HOMES

Regular physical activity is important for helping keep the body healthy and active.

Exercising is immensely beneficial to your life and should be incorporated into your weekly routine. The rise of virtual fitness has made it easy to access a range of physical activities available at your fingertips.

While you may be able to find time for exercise on the weekends, virtual fitness allows you to train from home or anywhere, without actually going to a traditional gym setting.

Here are some of the advantages of virtual fitness:

- Flexibility Many individuals find it hard to start and end their day at the gym due to demanding work and personal schedules.
 Virtual fitness allows you to exercise at your own pace.
- Convenient and easy to access - You do not have to leave the comfort of your home. With the internet at your fingertips, you can take

any kind of class you want. You may also follow the KZN Department of Health's social media platforms to access more physical workouts that you could try in your own time.



 Cost-effective - Many people are looking to save much as possible. Virtual fitness makes saving easier as it is more affordable than paying a monthly gym membership fee.

If you are regularly physically active, you may:

- Manage your weight better
- Reduce the risk of diseases such as stroke, diabetes, heart attack and cancer
- Improve the health of your brain
- Strengthen your bones and muscles
- Improve your ability to do everyday activities

By being physically active, you are helping yourself to live a better, healthy lifestyle, and it is proof that you take your own health seriously. Your body is the most priceless possession, therefore, you must take care of it.

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COMPILED BY:

CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS (KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH)

TEL: 033 395 2547 OR 033 395 2653 I FAX: 033 342 9477

SEND STORIES YOU WOULD LIKE TO FEATURE ON THE KZN HEALTH CHAT BULLETIN TO:

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