



health

Department:

Health

PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

EZASEMTSHEZI

ESTCOURT DISTRICT HOSPITAL NEWSLETTER: JUNE EDITION

COMRADES SUCCESSES AT ESTCOURT HOSPITAL



MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE CEO



MR. B.J. VILAKAZI – HOSPITAL CEO

Welcome to the June edition of our internal newsletter filled with news which are of the institution's best interest.

The new financial year has started and I know that we all have the muscle to pull it through therefore we need to work as a collective for us to achieve a common objective.

As we pay tribute to the youth of 1976 it is really heartening to hear youth of today especially those in health fraternity avow to take the this department to new height. This institution has created a conducive envi-

ronment for new innovative ideas to be put forward for the improvement of quality of care provided to our patients.

When one think of health, the first profession that comes to his or her mind is nursing and they are referred to as the backbone of our health system hence in May we commemorate International Nurses day, the Anniversary of the founder of modern nursing, Florence Nightingale. I would like to acknowledge great strides made to improve this profession to meet the ever changing needs of the patients.

Theme for 2014 is Nurses: A force for change- a vital resource for health and on that note I would like to humbly honour contribution made by nurses in this institution for serving our patients with dedication and integrity. Your positive contribution has not gone unnoticed and your perseverance even during trying times has been remarkable. I would like to urge each one of you to continue to serve our patients with dignity and God will bless you.

This institution is honoured to have employees that successfully participated in the comrades marathon which took place in June 2014. This should send a clear message to the rest of the employees that are not physically active to partake on any physical activity. I therefore challenge management at all levels to lead from the front in this for us to be a healthy workforce and will be practicing what we preach.

NEWSLETTER COMPILED BY ZANDILE MNGOMEZULU– PRO

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PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE YOUTH OF 1976

YOUNG HEALTH PROFESSIONALS WERE INTERVIEWED ON HOW CAN THEY EXPRESS GRATITUDE TO THIS GREAT LEADERS AND THIS IS WHAT THEY HAVE TO SAY :

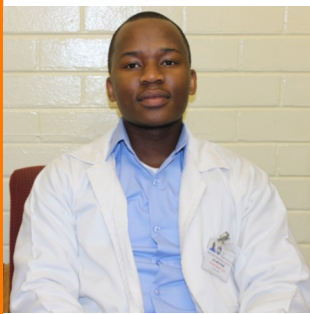


I am Akhona Diniso, intern pharmacist. I believe it is about time that we, the youth of today stop being selfish and take a minute to think about what the youth of 1976 had to endure for us to enjoy endless opportunities. Pharmacy is a scarce skill in South Africa and I will take it upon myself that I attract as many learners as possible to this profession in honour of these fallen heroes and heroines and moreover for the benefit of our communities.



I cannot imagine how our education would have been like if it wasn't for the youth of 1976. Let us not forget where we came from as the youth of today and make a commitment to make a positive contribution in society using the very same education that was hard earned. My dream is to see the department of Health moving swiftly from curing diseases to preventing them through integrated education programmes that will be sustainable for the benefit of our society and I am on board to make a mark. Hats off, I salute U!

N.B. Celekhulu– Student Nurse



It is humbling to be living in a country where I can pursue a career of my choice and thanks to the youth of 1976, you didn't die in vain! It is then upon the youth of today to take this country forward through getting an education and effecting change for the benefit of our patients. I have just started working in the Physio department but managed to give my input for the service provided to our clients to be user friendly and thanks to the team for being so welcome to new ideas.

Africa Mthiyane Physiotherapy Comserve



Today, youth not only have access to different career opportunities but are also taught in their indigenous languages and for that I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the youth of 1976. I chose nursing which happens to be a noble profession that has experienced challenges like staff attitude. In honouring these great young leaders that sacrificed their lives, I will lead by example in ensuring that I portray a positive attitude to patients regardless of challenges and pressure we at times work under and that is the first step to recovery.

K.G. Zondi– Student Nurse



It is really sad how we, as the youth of today celebrate June 16. It is all about having fun not thinking about how we got where we are and we only care about today. I salute the youth of 1976 and have made a decision to assist the patients especially those that are physically challenged hence I specialized in OT. It is my dream to see them being absorbed into the labour market because they are also human beings and have to be able to put bread on the table like everybody else. I know it is a huge task and involves a lot of stakeholders and but I am committed to make a change and in that way I will be saying thank you to these great leaders.

Senamile Mavuso– Occupational Therapist



This country has a rich history especially Soweto Uprising. These great leaders were fighting the good fight of education which is key to the betterment of people's lives. It is up to us, youth of today to show them that they didn't die in vain! Let us get proper education to change lives. I have a passion for radiography which is critical in the management of patients. My motto says: Patient first then everything else follows simple because I want to make a difference in society. I am determined to take this profession to new heights. I will also be glad if patient care can be added to all clinicians as a compulsory module to enlighten these professionals on the consequences of failing to serve patients with passion and integrity.

S.J. Hadebe– Radiographer Comserve

CHANGE OF MENTALITY IS VITAL TO FIGHT OBESITY

Growing up brings a lot of challenges in life and being mocked for different reasons by peers from time to time becomes a norm to many. This is what Bongani Mkhize, hospital Optometrist went through as well as a child due to his weight. He accepted that and went on with life until he finished studying and then kick started his career in 2011.

He noticed that he was gaining even more weight and couldn't take it anymore and he joined the gym like many who do so without set goals to achieve and end up losing interest along the way but with Mr. Mkhize stopped attending classes because he was hit hard by weight equipment at the gym. It was then business as usual until he find out that he has gained enormous weight again and that called for a swift change of mentality for him to put a stop to this and that saw him making a commitment that he will do whatever it takes to lose weight regardless of all the obstacles that may come his way.

Bongani started by exercising alone with a clear plan and achievable targets in mind and then decided to join Arthur Cresswell Marathon as an next assignment of which he passed excellently which then called for the next one and has successfully run a number of other marathons like Umgeni, Mandela and most remarkably Comrades which he finished in a time of 10. 39.35. When asked how he feels after having finished his first marathon, Bongani said that he was excited about his achievement and looking forward to next year's challenge.

Mr. Mkhize who is only 25years old urged the youth to take charge of their health as they are the future of this country. South Africa is among the top three countries in the world with highest obesity rate in the world and youth can change this by being physically active at an early age so that by the time they have families they are used to that way of living and can influence families to follow suit and obesity can be history in South Africa.



Mr. Mkhize excited after having received his medal

IF I CAN DO IT, SO CAN YOU: SHARMILA

These are the words from Mrs. Sharmila Rajcoomar who is working as a Chief Radiographer in this institution. She is passionate about physical activities and to her being physically active is just a hobby. Can't help it but ask how that is possible when many of us see this huge task hence research has indicated that South Africa is among the top three countries in the world in obesity rankings. In her answer, Mrs. Rajcoomar said that commitment is crucial to make it.

Sharmila started physical activities during her school days and surprisingly after getting married that is when she started to engage fully because she told herself that she still has a responsibility of being in good shape, healthy and looking sexy. This seems impossible with a lot of house chores to take care of as a wife and a parent but Sharmila told herself from the beginning that regardless of how demanding her career or parenthood may be, she will spare "her time" to exercise

for her to distress and look forward to a new day ahead.

She however agreed that family support has assisted her alot to achieve what she has so far. Her husband and their children have joined her and this has made her life much easier. Apart from that she is working for Department of Health which is a custodian of wellness programmes and that inspired her to lead from the front in the fight against unhealthy lifestyle and not surprising that she has successfully finished comrade's marathon five times!

Department of health made strides in improving health condition of its employees by giving them two hours per week to exercise. Research has proven that when people eat healthy food, exercise, drink eight glasses of water per day their lifespan is prolonged and can prevent diseases like diabetics, high blood pressure and heart diseases. Sharmila urged staff to lead by example by living a healthy lifestyle so that patients can see that it is possible from us.



Mrs. Rajcoomar doing what she does best 'running'

NURSES: A FORCE FOR CHANGE – A VITAL RESOURCE FOR HEALTH

Nurses have touched human lives in different ways and their immense contribution in bettering health services is evident in different communities. These health professionals form the largest healthcare workforce hence many patients regard almost every health care professional as a Nurse.

South Africa is part of the evolving world that has brought challenges and pressure to this profession but thank you to our Nurses who managed to remain the backbone of the health system regardless of all obstacles that have come their way. Today the country is faced with quadruple disease burden and we are confident that leadership in this profession will successfully rise to the occasion with support of all other professionals for the benefit of our patients especially the poor and vulnerable.

As we commemorate the International Nurses Day which emanated from the birthday of the Nursing icon, Florence Nightingale who made great strides in the development of this profession which is celebrated annually on the 12 May, it is due that we reflect back on the achievements made and celebrate positive contribution made in the health system. On that note, it has also been identified that this profession has experienced challenges effected by “external forces” i.e. changes in the country and the world. Nursing used to be a noble profession but due to high unemployment rate, it has been seen by many as an alternative career. This has yielded negative results like an increase in a number of cases reported on staff attitude which has been include by MEC for health in KZN as one of the key priority areas. However senior professionals are entrusted with the responsibility of leading by example so that new professionals can follow suit for us to successfully root this out.

There has been an outcry from nurses that they are not fully involved in the development of programmes to improve health services as it is them that have more practical knowledge on how these programmes should be designed and rolled out for effective and efficient outputs. We trust that nurses will now engage fully in advocacy and lobbying for them to embrace new programmes that are introduced for us to take standard of health services to new height.

Regardless of all the challenges, Estcourt hospital management and staff salute Nurses specially those based in this facility for your tireless efforts in improving lives of our communities. We urge you to hold on even during trying times and God will reward you at the end .

WITH RESPECT

ESTCOURT HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT

“EAP, A BENEFIT FOR BOTH PARTIES”

EAP is perceived by many as a service for “certain people” yet we all human beings and at some stage we in one way or the other experience problems in life but Ms. Mthembu has proven us all wrong and this is what she had to say;

Who is Thembeke Mthembu”?

Ms. Thembeke Mthembu is a qualified social worker with an honors degree and I coordinate EAP in the hospital

What is EAP and why it is important in the workplace?

EAP is a cost effective initiative that was introduced specifically for staff after it was identified by employers that employees function better when there are coping with challenges in their broader lives. These challenges often spiral out of control and negatively affect ones work performance

Why are you saying it is cost effective?

It is because employees access services for free while at work without having to take some time off to attend to personal problems and the employer has nothing to lose in the process.

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What services are offered by EAP?

EAP assist staff with staff with alcohol & drug abuse; depression and stress; emotional problems, legal & maintenance; finances/ budgeting; work related stress; health problems; trauma; marital problems; interpersonal relationships; family & parenting problems and different forms of abuse. The EAP is also available to immediate family members since often problematic issues involve family members.

How can employees access these services?

Employees are welcome to come directly to the office of the EAP or may be referred by the supervisor if they bring their problems to his/her attention or of supervisor sees decline in one’s work performance, attitude or behavior. Employees must however remember that this service is voluntary, confidential and non- punitive.

Do you have a success story to share with us for the few months you have joined the hospital?

Yes, one employee had a bad attitude problem came to me for assistance. I was amazed about her level of cooperation and after having attended few sessions she improved dramatically and supervisor was surprised by her improvement in a short space of time. Once the employee is done with her sessions will then



Ms. Thembeke Mthembu , our newly appointed EAP Practitioner during exclusive interview with the PRO

capacitate supervisor on how to help this employee improve even more.

Why is that important?

It is in fact crucial so that supervisors/line managers are able to create a conducive environment for a changed employee. If that is not done, chances are recovering employees may go back to square one.

What advise can you give to staff about EAP?

Don’t be scared of EAP, take advantage of these services available and confidentiality is guaranteed. It will do you good and moreover assist you to be more efficient in your working environment. To those that have already started sessions surely it has made a difference and when they are done with their sessions they should make sure that they don’t look back and their lives will be changed forever.