



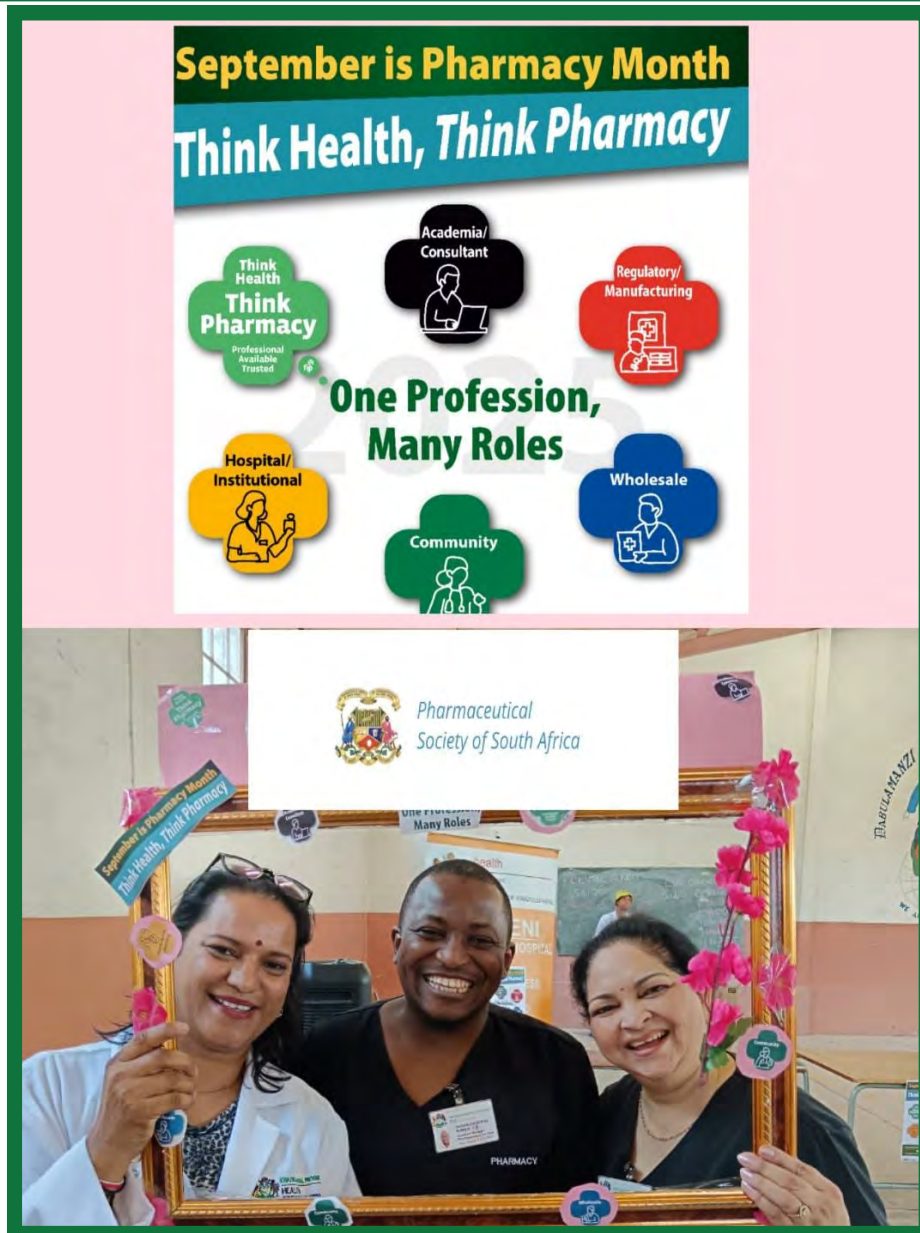
KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE
HEALTH
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

UMGENI HOSPITAL

UMGENI

NEWS

DECEMBER 2025



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KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health



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**GROWING
KWAZULU-NATAL
TOGETHER**

Key Note Address From Acting CEO



Mrs. S.T Chule (Acting CEO)

As we approach the end of another challenging yet meaningful year. I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to every member of the Umgeni Hospital family. Your dedication, resilience, and unwavering commitment to our patients remain the backbone of our institution and it enabled me as an Acting CEO to steer the hospital towards achieving its objectives. This year has not been without difficulties. We faced significant budgetary constraints, staff shortages, staff losses and increasing working pressure. Yet through these challenges you continued to uphold the values of compassion, professionalism and teamwork. Your ability to provide quality care under such demanding circumstances is truly admirable, and I want to acknowledge the sacrifices you made daily to keep our hospital functional.

Thank you for standing together with management, for believing in our mission and to contributing to the growth and stability at Umgeni Hospital. Your commitment made our progress as management. As an Acting CEO I am reminded daily that our greatest success comes from the hearts and hands of our staff –together we can make Umgeni Hospital exceptional. “Together we rise, together we serve, together we can achieve that none of us could accomplish alone”.

As we enter the festive season, I wish you and your family joy, rest and peace. For those working over the festive season thank you for your sacrifice and ensuring continuity of care.

Let's enter the new year united, focused and inspired– ready to build an even stronger Umgeni Hospital.

Think Health, Think Pharmacy: Umgeni Hospital Empowers Young Minds.



On September 04, 2025, the pharmacy team from Umgeni Hospital embarked on a mission to inspire a culture of health and wellness among young minds of Dabulamazi Combined School. As part of pharmacy week 2025, with the theme, “Think Health, Think Pharmacy”, the team brought their knowledge and skills to the school, sharing valuable information and interactive experiences with the learners.

The pharmacist engaged the students with practical tips and information, focusing on the importance of health living, understanding medication, making informed decisions, and range of pharmacy services that cater to diverse patient needs: Hospital pharmacy, Wholesale, Regulatory and manufacturing pharmacy. The learners were enthusiastic, curious, and participating in discussions that showcased their eagerness to learn. This showed the importance role pharmacist play promoting health and wellness, and demonstrated Umgeni hospital commitment to community outreach and education.

The learners left with valuable insight, a renewed passion for health living, and a clear message: Think Health, Think Pharmacy. The visit was a clear example of the power of working together and engaging with the community, and a reminder that health education is a vital investment in our collective future. Umgeni Hospital is proud to have played a part in shaping their journey towards a healthier, happier life.

As we celebrate pharmacy week 2025 , we are reminded that Think Health, Think Pharmacy is more than just a theme it is a call to action for a healthier, more vibrant community.



Umgeni Hospital Hosts Life-Saving Blood Drive with South African Blood Service.

On November 5, 2025, Umgeni Psychiatric Hospital, welcomed the South African National Blood Service (SANBS) for blood donation drive. This initiative aimed to boost the country's blood reserves, which are crucial for patients undergoing surgery, cancer treatment, and those suffering from blood disorder.

The team worked efficiently to ensure the smooth and safe donation process for all participants. The blood donation process is quick, taking only 20 minutes, and donors must meet eligibility criteria, including being between 16 and 75 years old, weighing over 50kg, and being in good health.

The power of blood donation: Every donation is a lifeline for those in need. The SANBS team works tirelessly to collect 3,000 units of blood daily, but they need more committed donors to meet this goal.

The impact of donating blood: Each time you donate blood you can save 3 lives (1 pint of blood = 3 lives). Donating blood is voluntary. Blood goes to all victims of accidents, pregnant women, cancer patients, anemic patients.

Benefits: Donating blood also has health benefits for the donor, such as reducing the risk of heart disease and high cholesterol.

SANBS relies on voluntary donations, with no expectation of return. By donating blood, you are giving the gift of life to those in need. SANBS is urging all South Africans to donate blood, especially with the festive season approaching and anticipated decline in donations.



Team Members from SANBS

Jacaranda Trees at Umgeni Hospital

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he Jacaranda Tree is an iconic symbol of South Africa's spring season! Its vibrant purple flowers are a breathtaking sight". This kind of a special tree (Jacaranda) were planted ages ago before KZN Health took over and continued taken care of with trimming and monitoring that it does not affect lights around the facility.

Here are some reasons why jacaranda trees are important:

1. **Aesthetics:** To those that love nature the Jacaranda Trees provide or add beauty around the facility. Jacaranda Trees are special or popular choice for parks, gardens, and streets as well as at Umgeni Hospital.
2. **Environmental Benefits:** They provide shade, improve air quality, and support local wildlife. They provide shade to staff during lunch breaks and ideal for Mental Health Care Users during picnics organized by Friends of Umgeni (an NGO supporting patients).
3. **Cultural Significance:** Jacaranda Trees are a beloved part of SA's cultural heritage, often associated with spring and new beginnings. The tree is significant even to staff that have been with us for years.
4. **Best Gardening:** Jacaranda Trees are part of the well-maintained gardens within Umgeni Hospital. The nicely maintained environment attracted the executive for uMgungundlovu Women's Forum to choose this facility to host the Women's Day event. The theme for that event was a picnic; all staff enjoyed.

During spring season come to Umgeni Hospital to witness jacaranda blooms and enjoy beauty of nature. Let's continue to cherish and care to these magnificent trees, ensuring they continue to thrive for generations to come.



Jacaranda Trees

National Nutrition Week

On the 9th-15th of October every year the Department of Health including Umgeni Hospital celebrate National Nutrition Week and the 16th of October we celebrate World Food Day. The focus was on Food Security, Food Systems and Better food choices.

“It is imperative to provide correct nutrition during the first 1000 days of life to ensure correct developmental milestones, growth and proper cognitive function”.

The Dietician (Mrs. Naidoo) circulated pamphlets which educated staff with the following information.

SPEAK UP FOR YOUR HEALTH

“Low fat” doesn’t always mean healthy. Read food labels carefully and check for fat, sugar and salt content.

- **You have a right** to clear labels and truthful marketing.
 - **Ask for affordable, healthy options** at school tuck shops, canteens and from food vendors
 - **Bring reusable water bottles** to school and ask for water refill stations.
 - Adverts for unhealthy foods are everywhere - schools, taxis, social media. Ask for these to be removed at school and in your community.
 - Become aware of how food and beverage marketing is deliberately targeting young people.
- Share your voice** - make a video and share with peers to stand up against being manipulated by the big food and beverage industry.

- Ask for school food gardens that **offer learners fresh produce and enhance healthy eating**. It's a great way to introduce the importance of seasonal and indigenous foods while also encouraging physical activity and appreciation for where our food comes from. It also builds skills for learners and communities.

WHAT YOU EAT SHAPES HOW YOU AGE

Did you know? Diets that are varied, balanced and as close to their natural states as possible (seasonal fruits and vegetables, legumes, whole grains, nuts, healthy fats, and lean or plant-based proteins) are essential for supporting growth, strengthening immunity and preventing disease.

Ensuring your diet provides a wide range of vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients will help protect you against micronutrient deficiencies and non-communicable diseases (NCDs), such as obesity, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, and certain cancers. A nourishing diet also contributes to healthy gut function, better mental health, and lower rates of stunting and anemia.



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Umgeni Hospital has partnered with the department of education for an outreach programme. On 12.09.2025 at Elijah Mpophomeni Hall (Mpophomeni). The facility jointly partnered with other Department of Education for a Career Day at Enhlanhleni Senior Primary School (Mpophomeni).

The team representing Umgeni Hospital were as follows: Mr. Ross (Professional Nurse), Mrs. Hadebe (Social Worker), Mrs. Naidoo (Dietitian), Mrs. Ramchurran (Chief Occupational Therapist) and Miss Ndlovu and Miss. Khena (Social Worker Interns).

The purpose of the career day was as follows:

- Introduce learners to various career options.
- Help them understand the relevance of education to real life careers.
- Develop an interest in different fields and
- Build connections between school subjects and future careers.

On this day 190 students were inspired and rejuvenated about thinking positively for future passions.

Article Submitted by:

Mrs. Naidoo (Dietician)



Team from Umgeni Hospital from left: Mrs. Hadebe (Social Worker), Mrs. Naidoo (Dietitian), Miss Ndlovu and Miss. Khena (Social Worker Interns), Mrs. Ramchurran (Chief Occupational Therapist) and far back Mr. Ross (Professional Nurse)

The Healing Power of Sports: Why Psychiatric Patients Need It

Umgeni Hospital was invited to Umzimkhulu Hospital Sport Gala Tournament, with other hospitals namely (Town Hill, Fort Neiper, Madadeni, and Ekuhlengeni), for a fun-filled sport day on the 19 November 2025. Sports and physical activity have long been recognized as essential components of overall health and wellness. For psychiatric patients, sports can be a game-changer, providing a range of benefits that can improve mental health and well-being.

Benefits of Sports for Psychiatric Patients:

- **Reduces symptoms:** Regular exercise has been shown to reduce symptoms of depression, anxiety, and other mental health conditions.
- **Improves mood:** Exercise releases endorphins, which can boost mood and energy levels.
- **Social connections:** Team sports provide opportunities for social interaction, reducing feelings of loneliness and isolation.
- **Builds self-esteem :** Participating in sports can enhance self-confidence and self-worth.
- **Provides structure:** Regular sports activities can provide a sense of routine and structure.

In South Africa, initiatives like "Running for Mental Health" and sports therapy programs are making a difference in the lives of psychiatric patients. These programs provide a safe and supportive environment for individuals to engage in physical activity, build social connections, and improve their mental health.



Patients taking the podium

Tips for safety tips during festive season

1. **Plan:** Check Road conditions and weather forecasts before you hit the road.
2. **Drive sober:** Don't drink and drive; use a designated driver or call a friend or a taxi.
3. **Buckle up:** Seatbelts save lives.
4. **Be patient:** Avoid speeding, roads are busy during this time.
5. **Take breaks:** Stop every few hours to rest and stretch your legs.
6. **Watch out for pedestrians:** They're excited, be cautious, especially at night.
7. **Secure your vehicle:** Lock doors, don't leave valuables in sight.
8. **Follow road signs:** Pay attention to speed limits and road closures.

Stay safe on the roads!!!!!! 🚗👉

New Year's Plan: A Fresh Start

As the clock strikes midnight on New Year's Eve, we're given a chance to reflect on the past and look forward to the future. It's a time to set new goals, make resolutions, and create a plan for a better tomorrow.

Whether you're looking to kickstart a new hobby, focus on self-care, or simply spend more time with loved ones, a well-think-out plan is essential. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- Set realistic goals: Break down big objectives into smaller, achievable steps.
- Prioritize self-care: Make time for activities that nourish your mind, body, and soul.
- Connect with others: Schedule regular check-ins with friends and family.
- Try something new: Step out of your comfort zone and explore new interests .

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