



PHASA

Public Health Association
of South Africa

The Pulse

NEWSLETTER

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Edition

8



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Give us a blurb about a story on page 4. Make this your own.



IT IS IN YOUR HANDS! LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND!

The COVID-10 pandemic is a global health crisis, as well as a human, economic and social crisis. The COVID-19 outbreak affects all segments of the population and is particularly detrimental to members of those social groups in the most vulnerable situations. Read more in this message from our PHASA president, Dr Moeketsi Modisenyane.



CLIMATE CRISIS AND CORONAVIRUS: SEARCHING FOR SHARED SOLUTIONS

Climate change is now widely recognised as a planetary crisis. The current coronavirus pandemic has rapidly and utterly changed our world and our nation, forcing lockdowns, changing social habits, curtailing travel, and devastating economies. The sudden convergence of these two global crises has prompted examination of their connections, potential shared solutions, and unprecedented opportunities to fundamentally change our relationship with the planet for a more sustainable future.

AFRICA IN THE PATH OF COVID-19

Indeed we are facing challenging times due to the impact of COVID-19. The African continent is no stranger to infectious diseases and epidemics, with the ongoing threat of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and the Ebola virus. However, despite resilience over the years, we are not fully prepared for the impact of COVID-19. For Africa, this is not a global pandemic- the daily challenges we face on the continent go beyond a virus affecting our respiratory systems and bodies. Millions of people daily face a lack of access to basics such as water and sanitation, healthcare, food, racial stratification, among others. Through previous outbreak experiences, our health systems are less fragile, but coordinated approaches are required if we intend on facing the full wrath of this novel coronavirus. Read more.

<https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMp2008193>

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DATA ANALYTICS MAKES HEALTHCARE AWARE

The last few months have shown us how important it is to be #SMARTandAWARE – not just for the advancement and evolution of humans, but for our survival as well. Data is what makes us smart. Getting insights and telling stories from that data is what makes us aware.





RISK OF COVID-19 TRANSMISSION AT RELIGIOUS GATHERINGS

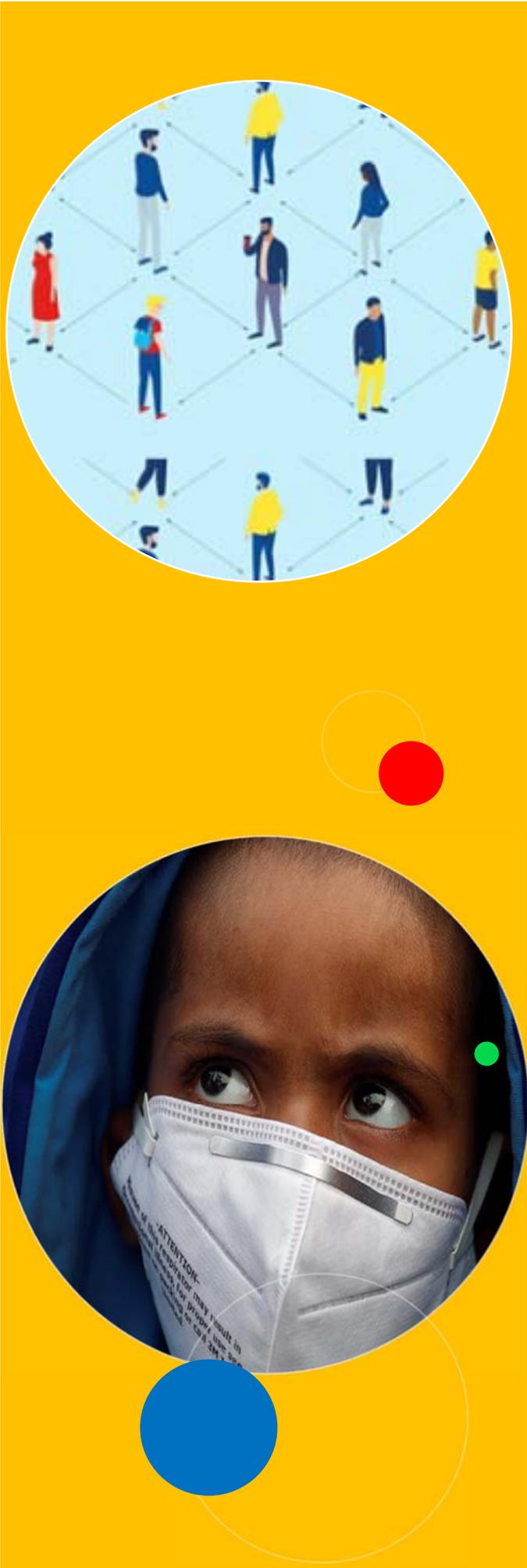
In South Africa, places of worship were allowed to resume religious services of up to 50 people when the country moved to Alert Level 3 on 1 June 2020.

Religious gatherings provide spiritual and emotional support, which could be beneficial to the wellbeing of South Africans, however religious gatherings of up to 50 individuals pose a risk of increased transmission of COVID-19 due to the probable challenges with physical (social) distancing. The College of Public Health Medicine in South Africa issued a statement following the decision to allow religious gatherings of up to 50 people, under Alert Level 3 of the Disaster Regulations for COVID-19, calling for this decision to be reconsidered, and for religious bodies to think of different ways to ensure worship can continue in safe ways. **Read more.**

<https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-06-02-reopening-places-of-worship-is-a-serious-public-health-concern/#gsc.tab=0>

“Every life lost is
a tragedy” says
President Cyril
Ramaphosa





BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCE AND ITS POTENTIAL TO GUIDE OUR RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Behaviour change is critical to limit COVID-19 transmission and prevent infections, and thus public education and prevention messaging is vital. Behavioural sciences offer strategies for changing behaviour to support adherence to these prevention measures. Read more.

<https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-05-15-behavioural-science-and-its-potential-to-guide-our-response-to-covid-19/#gsc.tab=0>

COVID19 AND NEED FOR SOCIAL SOLIDARITY

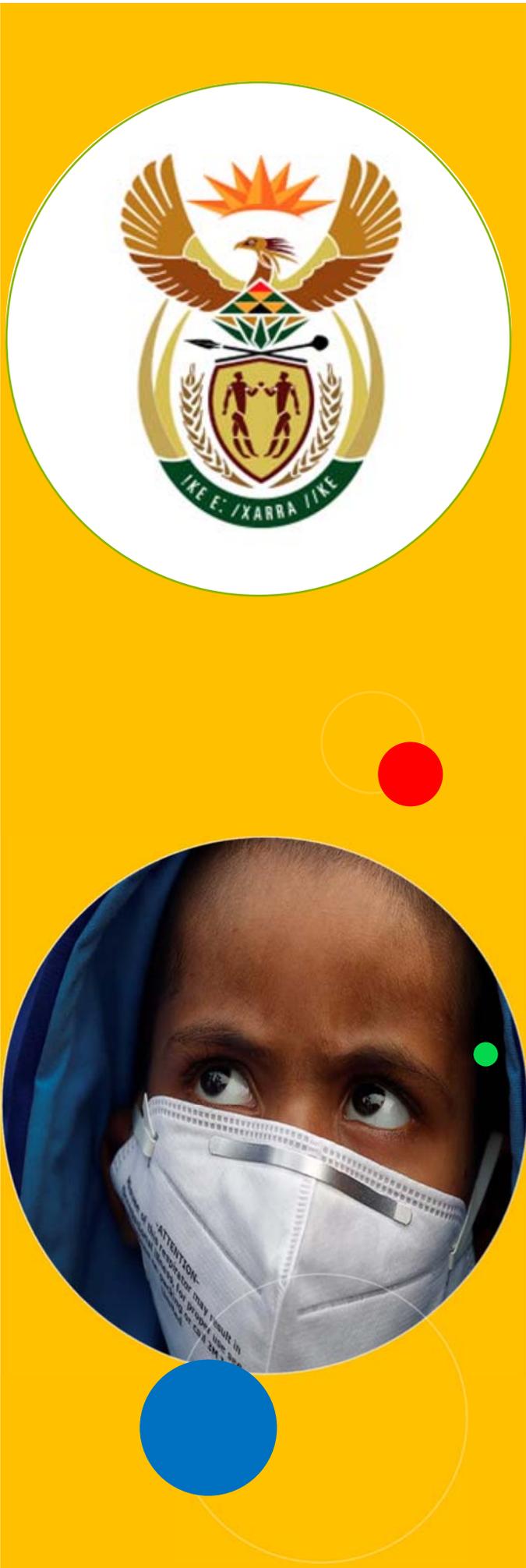
COVID19 has truly tested our resolve and demanded social solidarity and Ubuntu, like never before. South Africa's inequity and disparities are even more visible now than ever.

WHERE THERE'S SMOKE, THERE'S FIRE! CONFLICTS OF INTEREST OF COVID-19 RESEARCH FUNDERS

The Foundation for a Smoke-Free World (FSFW) was established in 2017, to conduct "independent" research into Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS). Paradoxically, the FSFW is funded by the Philip Morris International (PMI), a giant cigarette manufacturer. It was brought to PHASA's attention that the FSFW recently sent out a request for proposals, seeking what it refers to as "significant collaboration" for research on the associations between COVID-19, smoking and nicotine use. PHASA categorically rejects the idea that FSFW is able to operate independently or support independent science on a matter with huge financial implications for the tobacco industry.

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC THROUGH THE EYES OF YOUTH IN NORTH WEST

Tshepo Dintoe, a PHASA HAST SIG Member and HIV Counsellor at the Aurum Institute, offers a youth perspective on the COVID-19 pandemic.



WILL COVID-19 FINALLY CHANGE GOVERNMENTS' MIND ABOUT AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS HEALTH PROMOTION?

Keeping people healthy is at the forefront of our minds right now with the COVID-19 pandemic. Essentially, this involves health promotion – activities and action to promote health and change our behaviour to reduce possible transmission of the coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2). The government is spending billions of Rands on preventing COVID-19 infection with a large amount of money going towards health promoting activities.

COVID-19 AND REFUGEES

Micheline Muzaneza- PHASA HAST SIG member, Sonke Gender Justice

Governments across the globe have put measures in place to respond to the threats posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, though many responses have focused on citizens much to the exclusion of other vulnerable groups such as refugees and migrants.

COVID-19 RESEARCH RESOURCES

part of activities of a global movement to reduce duplication in research, the COVID-END Synthesizing Working Group assembled resources for researchers who are involved with, or who want to become involved in, preparing timely, relevant and high-quality evidence syntheses to support decision-making about COVID-19. Fro more information, see the following website:

<https://www.mcmasterforum.org/networks/covid-end/working-groups/synthesizing>

<https://www.mcmasterforum.org/networks/covid-end/resources-for-researchers>



UPCOMING EVENTS

The 16th World Congress on Public Health **goes virtual!!!**



**PUBLIC HEALTH
FOR THE FUTURE
OF HUMANITY:
ANALYSIS,
ADVOCACY
AND ACTION**

**16th WORLD CONGRESS ON PUBLIC HEALTH
12-17 October 2020**

Roma Convention Center **La Nuvola**
www.wcph2020.com | info@wcph2020.com

Annual PHASA Conference postponed Feb 2021

PHASA 2020
**Keeping the promise:
closing the gap**

15 – 17 February 2021
University of Pretoria
City of Tshwane, South Africa

Conference website: phasa.samrc.ac.za