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COVID-19 news from SAMED, Government and Abroad.

KOPFONTEIN (BOTSWANA) BORDER CLOSED - DSV SUSPEND DELIVERIES

Further to an update DSV provided clients with, the Kopfontein Border Post (RSA/BOTS), in the vicinity of Zeerust, remain closed until further notice as a result of a positive COVID-19 case. The sanitizing and fogging of the Border Post offices had not taken place by the time DSV sent their updated communication.

The alternative Border Post, i.e. Skilpadshek, is not an option, as it is still experiencing high traffic and feedback DSV has received is that there are extremely long queues of vehicles waiting to cross the border into Botswana. Apart from the long queues, drivers are now required to undergo a COVID-19 test and will only be allowed entry into Botswana upon a negative test result being received; the testing process takes between 2 to 3 days.

Unfortunately, air-freight is not an option either as there are no flights into Botswana at the moment.

Given the nature of the goods being transported, DSV Healthcare has made a decision to temporarily suspend the dispatching of cargo destined for Botswana, up until they have confirmation that the Kopfontein Border Post has re-opened.

For any further queries, please contact Export manager – Christel Lupton on (010) 248 0822 or christel.lupton@za.dsv.com

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URGENT REQUEST RECEIVED VIA B4SA FOR OXYGEN AND CYLINDERS

The following hospitals/local municipalities are not receiving enough oxygen to meet daily patient needs and are in urgent need of oxygen cylinders.

- Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality (Victoria Hospital, Adelaide Hospital, Fort Beaufort Hospital and Bedford Hospital) need 315 cylinders, which may escalate to 840 by the end of July.
- Mquma Local Municipality will need 115 cylinders.

If you can assist in any way please contact Stavros Nicolaou on snicolaou@aspenpharma.com

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SAHPRA: ALTERNATIVE REGULATORY AND LICENCING REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN ALCOHOL-BASED HAND RUBS

In response to the anticipated shortage of alcohol-based hand sanitisers for use in the health care system as a result of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Minister of Health has, under specific conditions:

- excluded certain alcohol-based handrubs used or purporting to be suitable for use to prevent or treat infection within a clinical environment from the provisions of Section 14(1) of the Medicines and Related Substances Act, 1965 (Act 101 of 1965) (the Medicines Act) and regulations 11 and 12 of the General Regulations made in terms of the Act (Government Notice No. R. 859 of 25 August 2017) (the General Regulations), and
- excluded manufacturers licenced in terms of section 22C(1)(b) of the Medicines Act, of the mentioned alcohol-based handrubs from regulations 23(1)(c)(ii), 23(1)(c)(iv), and 23(2)(aa) of the General Regulations made in terms of the Act (Government Notice No. R. 859 of 25 August 2017) (the General Regulations).

Download the notice with the minimum requirements [here](#).

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BUSINESS FOR SA | COVID-19

PROSPECTS FOR AN EXTENSION OF TERS BEYOND JUNE 2020

Though greatly delayed, B4SA is pleased to be able to advise that Temporary Employer / Employee Relief Scheme (TERS) payments for June now appear to be flowing from the Unemployment Insurance Fund to employees or to employers to pass on to their employees. Business for South Africa (B4SA) representatives will continue to monitor the situation.

B4SA is aware that this raises the question of whether there is any possibility of the TERS being extended beyond June. It is of course still the case that a number of businesses are unable to continue to operate in full or in part and provide earnings to employees. In addition, there remain restrictions on the return to work of those with comorbidities.

For these reasons, the question of the extension of the TERS has been placed on the Nedlac agenda for further discussion.

B4SA would like to caution that, due to State financial constraints, it cannot be assumed that these discussions will have a positive outcome or, if there is any extension, what the terms of any such extension would be.

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FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT - 20 JULY

The president commended young entrepreneurs on capitalising on necessity is the mother of invention. As a number of social partners, including government, business, trade unions, community-based organisations, economists and political parties, are involved in crafting a new vision for a post-COVID-19 dispensation, a new breed of young entrepreneurs are seizing the opportunities that are opening up as we seek to deal with a new normal in our lives.

President Ramaphosa was pleased with the combination of foresight, creativity and business acumen displayed by a number of young South Africans who are coming up with home-grown solutions to the contemporary challenges.

To meet the increasing demand for personal protective equipment, a number of small businesses have been established to manufacture masks, visors and face-shields to supply to businesses and communities.

President Ramaphosa stated that the South African economic recovery cannot wait until the coronavirus pandemic is over. It needs to start now. [Read more](#)

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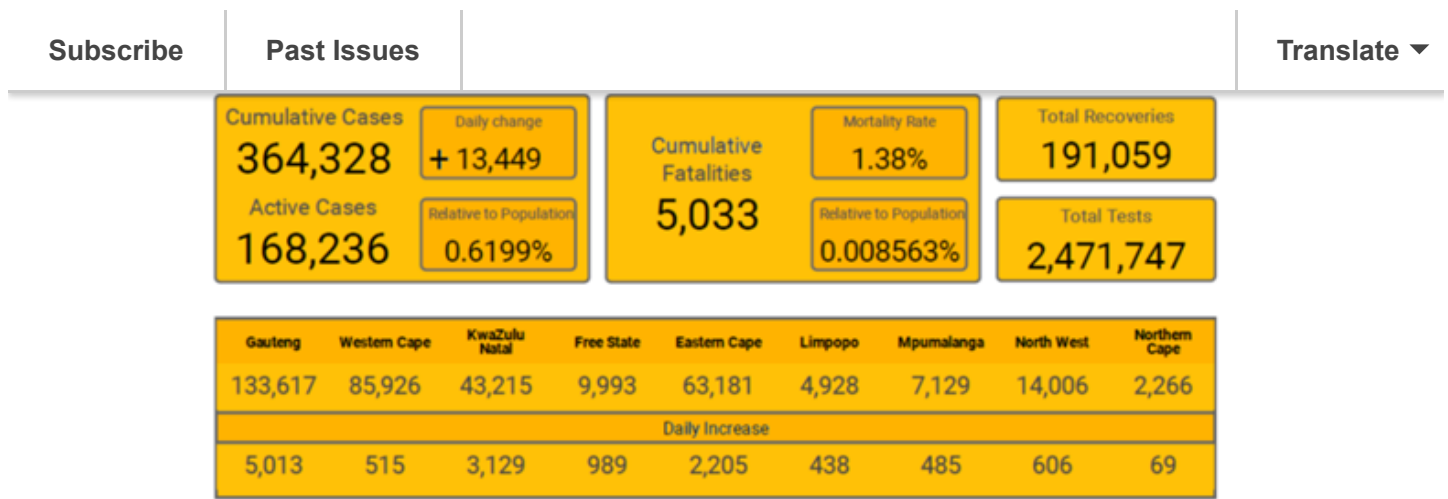
COVID-19 DEVELOPMENTS

TRACKING THE PANDEMIC

Trends to note in the latest COVID-19 statistics are the **sheer number** of new cases – taking South Africa close to the top of the list of most affected countries, the sustained surge in cases in **Gauteng**, and the fact that **KwaZulu-Natal** has overtaken the Eastern Cape in terms of new cases. The Western Cape continues to report a moderate number of new cases.

At the weekend Health Minister Zweli Mkhize appealed to **members of the public to do all within their power to limit the spread** of disease by complying with social distancing, mask wearing and hand washing. "As the government, we have [mobilised every resource](#), every faculty and wherewithal at our disposal to effect the necessary interventions. But the government cannot manage this unilaterally. Every single South African now needs to focus on adhering to recommendations pertaining to [non-pharmaceutical interventions](#)."(News24)

Dr Mkhize also announced that government will **not be releasing any of the medical advisories** drafted by the Ministerial Advisory Committee (MAC) on Covid-19, despite calls from senior scientific advisors that



HEALTH, CLINICAL AND RESEARCH DEVELOPMENTS

The Gauteng provincial government has adjusted its approach to testing for the novel coronavirus amid a shortage of test kits in SA, health MEC Bandile Masuku said.

According to Business Live, he said widespread community test would no longer occur and **test kits would now be reserved** for patients who required **hospitalisation**, who came to health facilities with **symptoms** and for people who were in **high-risk occupations** such as health workers, teachers, police officers and soldiers.

Business Insider carries an article featuring Emma Hodcroft, a geneticist at the Nextstrain project, who argues that there is still **no evidence the virus** causing COVID-19 had **changed in any significant way**: it had not become less deadly and nor had it become more contagious.

Health 24 reports that a new study has shown that even the sickest COVID-19 patients produce **T-cells** to fight the infection and this is a hopeful sign for researchers endeavouring to find a vaccine (which will also have to elicit T-cell production). The study also found that **the immune response** to the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which causes COVID-19, was the same in **American and Dutch** patients. "You want vaccine approaches to be grounded in observations from rather diverse settings to ensure that the results are generally applicable," said study co-leader Alessandro Sette, professor and member of the La Jolla Institute (LJI) for Immunology's Infectious Disease and Vaccine Center in La Jolla, California.

FINANCIAL AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENTS

Business Live reports that the **Solidarity Fund**, which was created to help support SA's health and welfare response to the COVID-19 crisis, has earmarked **R1.9bn for the country's health interventions**. Fund CEO Nomkhitha Nqweni said the fund was moving to the second phase of its intervention, which is largely focused on health work and the health response. To date, the fund has received R3.02bn in pledges with almost the full amount being converted and deposited into its bank account. Nqweni said almost 300 000 individuals have donated to the fund.

City Press, Sunday Times and the SABC have all reported on the **mounting battle about the ban on alcohol sales**. City Press takes the view that "disgruntled alcohol manufacturers and restaurateurs will not take government's U-turn lying down". It reported that there was concern about the **retrenchments** that would follow the renewed ban on the sale of alcohol. "Government has lost R3.5 billion in taxes [because of the ban]. From the 945 000 direct and indirect jobs in the industry, 110 000 were lost in the first part of the lockdown. And if the ban continues, about 13 000 jobs will be lost per week," Richard Rushton, chief executive of alcoholic drinks maker Distell, said.

Sunday Times reported that the alcohol industry wants to be **exempt from "sin taxes"** worth R5bn until it is able to trade again. Excise tax is imposed at the point of production not at the point of sale and therefore the industry would be taxed on a product that it could not dispose of.

There was also an **advert** on the front page of Sunday Times featuring the photos of dozens of industry workers and the appeal, "Help Save Our Jobs".

When President Cyril Ramaphosa announced the renewed ban on the sale and distribution of alcohol, he said **trauma cases** in hospitals had increased dramatically since the first alcohol ban was lifted under level 3, leading to a shortage of beds for virus patients. A Sunday Times article on the situation at **Helen Joseph Hospital** in Johannesburg **confirms the President's rationale**. The head of emergency room at Helen Joseph said the number of assault cases had risen to about 60 a week after alcohol sales were opened up under lockdown level 3, and in the last week they had dropped to 28 as the alcohol ban and curfew came into force.

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exception of schooling for matrics which should resume on 17 August. The newspaper report that **school governing bodies** were divided on the issue, with SGBs in wealthier areas favouring continuation of schooling and those in poorer areas supporting closure. The **Anglican church**, which runs a number of schools, has come out in favour of opening schools. A range of child development experts have advocated the opening of schools. Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga has indicated the Cabinet will make the final decision. Meanwhile, SABC reported on a **court order**, secured by the NGO Equal Education, which **compels** provincial education departments to **return school feeding schemes to operation**.

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COVID-19 EVENTS



WEBINAR

Functioning in the Age of COVID-19 | Leadership & Operational
Lessons from Anglo American & Return2Work

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IHRM: Webinar Update on the Impact of COVID-19

IHRM invites you to join them for a webinar on 31 July at 09h00 when Christoff Raath, Joint CEO of Insight Actuaries and Consultants, will provide an updated analysis on the Impact of COVID-19 on Medical Schemes and Private Hospitals, as South Africa reaches the peak of the pandemic.

For more details or to register [click here](#).

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