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COVID-19 news from SAMED, Government and Abroad.

### SAMED CONDEMNS UNETHICAL PROCUREMENT OF MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY

After reading about the corrupt and unethical procurement that has taken place recent news, SAMED released a press statement to condemn inappropriate and unethical business practices relating to medical technology. This was in response to allegations of unlawful procurement of personal protective equipment, sanitisers and other items essential to the COVID-19 response.

"We are appalled and deeply concerned with these reports and that these companies are tarnishing an industry that is essential to providing products that diagnose and treat patients," Tanya Vogt, SAMED Executive Officer said in an interview with eNCA



Watch the interview [here](#).

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### ATTENTION SAMED CEO/MD/GM/COO

Please join us for this SAMED CEO Forum on taking a stand against corruption within the MedTech sector.

We will look at ways to mitigate corruption risk and what can be done to prevent further damage to the MedTech sector.



**A CALL TO CEOs**

**The MedTech Sector: Corruption, procurement and quality.**

The SAMED Board invite Member Company CEOs to join them for a frank discussion on corruption, procurement and quality within MedTech and what can be done to reduce the risk.

**DATE:** 5 August 2020

**TIME:** 13h00 – 14h00

Sessions may be recorded. The link will open approximately 15 minutes prior to the start of the session. Please turn **Off** your camera and mute your microphone when joining.



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### HEALTH UPDATE

There has been a number of developments in business and law that may affect the medtech sector.

- Further [amendments](#) have been published to the **Lockdown Regulations on 31 July 2020**. Most amendments relate to non-healthcare sector matters (intra-provincial travel and contact sports), but the changed curfew will affect healthcare services, as non-emergency care can now be rendered until 22:00 (and no longer 21:00). The curfew still lasts till 04:00.
- The definition of **COVID-19 as a PMB** was updated, it is now in [version 4](#). Schemes now have to fund, retrospectively from 6 May, PPE, but only for positive case. Telehealth must also be funded. PCR tests can not be limited and new radiology codes are included.
- The **Compensation Fund's rules** in claiming for **occupationally-acquired COVID-19** were issued for all professionals and employers must follow.
- The **Health Sector Directions** issued under the Lockdown regulations were also [updated](#) in July. New provisions govern human resource emergency recruitment, including that "all health personnel" (retirees, unemployed, those employed at NGOs, etc.) must be available for **deployment**. Health authorities at the local, provincial and national level must endeavour to procure and supply equipment, sanitation and medical supplies. It also included the rules in relation to **mortal remains**, including persons who die at home.

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### COVID-19 DEVELOPMENTS

#### TRACKING THE PANDEMIC

In the last 24-hour reporting period, **KwaZulu-Natal** recorded the highest number of new cases (2 693), followed by **Gauteng** with 2 413. These two provinces are clearly the most severely affected at this point.

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511,485 Active Cases	+ 8,195	Fatalities	1.64%	347,227
155,892	Relative to Population 0.8702%	8,366	Relative to Population 0.014234%	Total Tests 3,036,779

Gauteng	Western Cape	KwaZulu Natal	Free State	Eastern Cape	Limpopo	Mpumalanga	North West	Northern Cape
180,532	96,838	82,300	23,099	79,410	9,044	15,120	19,961	5,131
Daily Increase								
2,413	649	2,693	791	628	165	439	247	170

In terms of tracking trends, the **seven-day** total for new infections and the average daily increase over seven days are regarded as a truer reflection than daily figures, where fluctuations are inevitable. However, it should be born in mind that the **extent of testing** influences all these figures and should be viewed alongside them. When this is done, it is apparent that what **seems like a decline** in new cases over the past two weeks might be partly due to a reduction in the number of tests conducted.

Week	Total new cases for seven days	Daily average in new cases over seven days	Total number of tests over seven days
26	40 832	5 833	239 024
27	58 616	8 373	263 077
28	79 492	11 356	324 239
29	88 086	12 583	317 356
30	81 105	11 586	302 031
31	66 052	9 436	263 001

Figures extracted from graphs on [www.covid19sa.org](http://www.covid19sa.org)

It is important to note the **continuing escalation** in confirmed cases (and deaths) in **all regions globally**, including some countries where the pandemic established itself as early as February or early March. The situation in the US is grave, and the sharp increase in India in the past few days has been noted by international news channels. In England, government is putting the brakes on further opening up of social life and increasing restrictions in the north of the country. The Australian state of Victoria has clamped down strongly after localised outbreaks in a country where control measures had seemed effected. The message for South Africa is clear: the only way forward is through continued vigilance and sustained restraint.

Global situation	Regional confirmed cases		Selected countries	
17 660 523 confirmed cases  (680 894 deaths)	<b>Americas</b>	9 476 763	<b>Brazil</b>	2 662 485
			<b>United States</b>	4 523 888
	<b>Europe</b>	3 375 535		
	<b>SE Asia</b>	2 131 165	<b>India</b>	1 750 723
	<b>Eastern Medit</b>	1 554 065		
	<b>Africa</b>	802 792		
	<b>Western Pacific</b>	3 194 62		

Source: WHO dashboard

#### PROCUREMENT AND CORRUPTION

The Sunday Times front-page lead focused on how allegations of corruption in the public sector procurement of PPE and related COVID-19 products has **split the African National Congress along the fault lines that opened-up in the pre-Nasrec era** of state capture. It reported that the national executive was divided on how to deal with the allegations of corruption. Enoch Godongwana, head of the NEC committee on economic transformation, proposed an inquiry by a panel headed by ANC veteran Kgalema Motlanthe and including former President Thabo Mbeki. It appears this proposal has not gained sufficient traction. At the same time, additional allegations of COVID-19 **state contracts being awarded to relatives of key ANC figures** have emerged. The individuals involved include: Ace Magashule's son, Tshepiso Magashule; Nomvula Mokonyane's daughter, Katileho; and Thembi Siweya's cousin, Hlulani

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In an interview with eNCA, the South African Medical Technology Industry Association (**SAMED**) **condemned unethical business practices** in respect of the procurement of medical technology. It was reacting to allegations of the unlawful procurement of personal protective equipment, sanitisers and other items essential to the COVID-19 response. SAMED represents established companies in the medical technology field and has previously cautioned against opportunistic players entering the field and possibly providing sub-standard products. "We are appalled and deeply concerned with these reports (of corruption) and that these companies are tarnishing an industry that is essential to providing products that diagnose and treat patients," said SAMED Executive Officer, Tanya Vogt. She urged people to report any unethical business practices of its members to the association.

**Health professionals have expressed their outrage** at the alleged corruption arising in response to the epidemic. Professor Francois Venter, divisional director of Ezintsha, Faculty of Health Sciences, at Wits University, told City Press: "It's a major blow for healthcare workers. The reason for lockdown in the first place was to protect our healthcare facilities, so having this happen was a huge shock. The country was **already ill-prepared in terms of personal protective equipment [PPE]** – we didn't need a whole lot of corruption on top of that." Infection control specialist Professor Shaheen Mehtar added: "Many of us have been **working 18- to 20-hour days** trying to keep the boat afloat and to see this is really upsetting. It's very concerning and **brings everyone down**. I don't know whether the accusations are true, but where there's smoke, there's usually fire, isn't there?"

Business Live reports that the **Western Cape provincial government has published a report detailing all personal protective equipment (PPE) procurement** and expenditure in the province. Western Cape MEC for finance and economic opportunities, David Maynier, said the first procurement disclosure report details all PPE procurement and expenditure by the Western Cape government departments from April 1 to June 30. Each transaction included details such as the name of the supplier, a description of the item, the unit price per item and the total spent.

News 24 reports that **Limpopo health authorities are expected to publish the details of their PPE tenders this week**. Provincial health department spokesperson Neil Shikwambana said R420 million had been spent on PPE to date. He denied reports suggesting Health MEC Phopi Ramathuba's involvement in tender processes. "MEC Ramathuba is the political head of the Limpopo Department of Health and she has no role in the supply chain management process and she knows her boundaries and limitations very well."

In an opinion piece on Business Live, **Bhada Pharasi**, a senior advisor to the joint office of the Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative and the Global Antibiotic Research and Development Partnership, argues: "The **Africa Medical Supplies Platform launched recently by AU chair President Cyril Ramaphosa could be the turning point the continent needs, not only as it fights the fallout from COVID-19, but in future too**. Described by Ramaphosa as the potential Amazon or Alibaba for resources to mitigate the coronavirus on the continent, the platform has been set up as a one-stop-shop to address shortages and security of supply. It has also pledged to ensure price competitiveness and transparency in procurement. This development creates an opportunity for the continent to work, after COVID-19, towards a lasting solution of pooled procurement, which would increase the availability of important health technologies, including drugs, vaccines and diagnostics. Pooled procurement, also known as joint purchasing, involves bulk purchasing of medicines on behalf of a group of countries or companies."

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SAMED is the voice of the South African medical technology industry. The not-for-gain-association was formed in 1985 and aims to provide members with a collective, objective and credible platform to engage with stakeholders. SAMED's members include individual medical technology companies, associate members and associations.

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