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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

NO. 457 **08 APRIL 2020**

DIRECTIONS ISSUED IN TERMS OF REGULATION 10(1)(a) OF THE REGULATIONS MADE UNDER SECTION 27(2) OF THE DISASTER MANAGEMENT ACT, 2002 (ACT No. 57 OF 2002): MEASURES TO ADDRESS, PREVENT AND COMBAT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

I, Dr Zwelini Lawrence Mkhize, the Minister of Health hereby, in terms of regulation 10(1)(a) of the Regulations issued in terms section 27(2) of the Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act No. 57 of 2002), published in Government *Gazette* No. 43107, Government Notice No. R318 of 18 March 2020("the Regulations"), issue directions to address, prevent and combat the spread of COVID-19 in South Africa.

Definitions

1. In these Directions, a word or expression bears the same meaning assigned to it in the Disaster Management Act, 2002 and the Regulations.

Recruitment and Training of Human Resources

2. (1) Additional health personnel should be recruited or seconded and deployed in strategic areas (points of entry, surveillance, case investigation, laboratory service, mortuaries, quarantine sites, etc.) for the purposes of addressing, preventing and combating the spread of COVID-19.

(2) The recruitment process in relation to critical COVID-19 related posts should be shortened by advertising a post and effecting appointments within a period of a week, on condition that an appointment may be set aside depending on the outcome of personnel suitability checks and verification processes. Special technical skills required to support the Department and enhance capacity on short term basis can be recruited in line with COVID emergency acquisitions processes.

(3) Enable urgent secondment of officials as may be required within a week.

(4) All health personnel (in the three spheres of government both public and private) must be trained on COVID-19 for the effective and efficient management of this pandemic including management of mortal remains.

Deployment of Human Resources

3. (1) All health authorities should identify where there is a need for deployment of health personnel to respond to this pandemic irrespective of their areas of jurisdiction or area of responsibility.

(2) All health personnel should be available for deployment to identified sites such as quarantine facilities and any other areas that require health services for rendering these health services.

Sourcing of Human Resources from the Expanded Public Works Programme, Retired Health Professionals, Community Based Organisation and Non-Governmental Organisations to Render Services in Identified Sites

4. (1) All retired health personnel, community services personnel, extended public works programme workers, Community Based Organisations and Non-Governmental Organisations may be requested to fill in positions on a temporary basis to assist in responding to the pandemic.

(2) All authorities should engage with Non-Governmental Organisations and individual retired health professionals to consider assisting government in rendering services in identified sites.

(3) All health authorities in the three spheres of government should liaise with the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure or relevant agencies for the purposes of sourcing expanded public works programme workers to support the fight against COVID-19.

Provision of Health Equipment, Sanitation Materials and Medical Supplies

5. (1) All health authorities should endeavour to source and provide health equipment, sanitation material and medical supplies to various sites as may be required to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak.

(2) All health care risk waste generated from the use of health equipment material and medical supplies should be treated in compliance with the provisions of the National Environmental Health Norms and Standards published in Government *Gazette* No. of 39561 of 24 December 2015.

(3) Personnel should be trained on the use of the above items including personal protective clothing.

Disposal waste and sanitation of equipment from quarantine or treatment facility

6. (1) All waste from a quarantine facility must be isolated and classified as high risk medical waste and must be incinerated at the approved waste site.

(2) All waste inside the quarantine facility must be isolated prior to being disposed of and handled.

(3) All equipment used in the quarantine facility must be sterilised first before it can be used again.

Identification and establishment of mortuaries that will accommodate all COVID-19 mortal remains

7. (1) All Metropolitan and District Municipalities must identify suitably authorised mortuaries with valid certificates of competence for the accommodation of all COVID -19 mortal remains and further management.

(2) All Provincial Departments of Health must identify suitable government mortuaries that will accommodate COVID-19 mortal remains and determine their capacity.

(3) All the above information should be submitted to the National Department of Health within 48 hours of the date of the publication of these directions for the attention of the Chief Director: Environmental Health and Port Health Services.

(4) All government mortuaries and designated private funeral undertakers should, when handling COVID-19 mortal remains, adhere to the Regulations relating to the Management of Human Remains promulgated under section 68(1)(b) read with section

90((4)(c) of the National Health Act, 2003, (Act No.61 of 2003) and published in Government Notice No. R363 of 22 May 2013 ("Human Remains Regulations).

(5) All persons handling COVID -19 human remains should wear suitable personal protective clothing at all times and should practice good personal hygiene such as washing hands with soap and water and using personal protective clothing.

(6) No person should at any given time handle the human remains with bare hands including kissing.

Disposal of COVID-19 mortal remains

8. (1) The handling, transportation and final disposal of COVID-19 human remains should be conducted in adherence only to chapters 5 and 6 of the Human Remains Regulations.

(2) All persons handling COVID -19 human remains should wear suitable personal protective clothing at all times.

(3) All persons handling COVID-19 human remains should practice good personal hygiene such as washing hands with soap and water and using personal protective clothing.

(4) No person may at any given time handle the human remains with bare hands including kissing.

(5) Metropolitan and Local Municipalities should ensure that the burial or cremation of COVID-19 mortal remains takes place in suitably approved cemeteries and crematoria, respectively.

Visitor from outside South Africa

9. (1) All accommodation providers who have visitors from areas outside the Republic residing on their premises must provide a list of such visitors to the National Department of Health within 24 hours of publication of this Direction.

(2) All such visitors must be placed on quarantine at the accommodation establishment where they are residing and undergo temperature monitoring on a daily basis for a period of 14 days or any number of days determined by the attending health officials.

General

10. These Directions are applicable for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic and the declared national state of disaster.

11. I would like to urge all stakeholders, sector departments, state organs, NGO's and members of the public to support the teams that are leading the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

DR ZWELINI LAWRENCE MKHIZE, MP
MINISTER OF HEALTH
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