

Media Statement

THE HEALTH SECTOR UNITES FOR WORLD ORAL HEALTH DAY 2024

15 March 2024

For immediate release

Pretoria – The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA), through the Professional Boards for Medical and Dental and Dental Assisting, Dental Therapy and Oral Hygiene, joins forces with the Gauteng Department of Health, the South African Dental Association (SADA), Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University and the University of the Witwatersrand (WITS) to commemorate World Oral Health Day on 19 March 2024.

The Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) event will take place at Thusong Primary School in Kagiso, located in the West Rand. Registered dental and oral health practitioners, along with students from Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University and the University of the Witwatersrand, will offer oral health education, awareness, screening, and care services to the learners.

World Oral Health Day is observed every year on 20 March to support the improvement of oral health worldwide. It serves as a platform for global, regional, and national activities centered around oral health. The World Dental Federation (FDI) urges global unity to alleviate the impact of oral diseases on individuals, healthcare systems, and economies worldwide. This year's theme, 'A Happy Mouth is a Happy Body,' underscores the importance of oral health for the overall well-being.

Oral diseases present substantial global health risks, leading to pain, social isolation, and severe complications. Yet, early detection can prevent and treat these issues effectively. This collaborative initiative aims to motivate action among individuals, involve schools and youth groups in educational activities, mobilise oral health professionals and the healthcare community to educate populations, and encourage government and policymakers to advocate for enhanced oral health for all.

Dr Magome Masike, Registrar of the HPCSA, highlights the significance of World Oral Health Day in raising awareness about oral health. He reaffirms Council's dedication to promoting oral health for all

and urges individuals and communities to adopt positive behavioural changes. Masike advocates for collaboration among stakeholders to facilitate the achievement of this objective. He commends the cooperative endeavours of the Gauteng Department of Health, SADA, Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University, WITS and dental institutions in providing services to learners.

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About the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA)

The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) also known as Council is a statutory body established under the Health Professions Act, 56 of 1974. The HPCSA is committed to protecting the public and guiding the professions. The mission of the HPCSA is quality and equitable healthcare for all.

The HPCSA is mandated to regulate the health professions in the country in aspects of education, training and registration, professional conduct, and ethical behaviour, ensuring Continuing Professional Development (CPD), and fostering compliance with healthcare standards.

To safeguard the public and guide the professions, registration in terms of the Act is a prerequisite for practising any of the health professions registrable with Council.

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