

MEDIA STATEMENT

To: Editors & Health Journalists
Issued by: Department of Health
Date: Saturday, 02 September 2023

Health Department, Stakeholders commemorate September Pharmacy Month

Pretoria: The Department of Health, working together with the South African Pharmacy Council, Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa and Independent Community Pharmacy Association will celebrate Pharmacy Awareness Month to educate the public about the role of pharmacists and pharmacy support personnel in delivering primary healthcare services to the community.

Pharmacy Month is a health awareness campaign observed annually in September across the country to acknowledge the invaluable contribution by pharmacists and support staff in improving the health of the population and educating them about health care services provided by pharmacy professionals. The 2023 campaign will be commemorated under the theme: ***"Pharmacy United in Promoting Healthcare for Patients"***.

As medicine experts and one of the most-accessible health care professionals, pharmacists hold the responsibility to deliver effective, safe and quality medicines and services to achieve optimal health outcomes. They play a critical role in identifying and preventing medication errors by communicating with the prescriber for clarity and certainty instead of making assumptions, especially in instances where they cannot read the prescriptions or they have some doubts.

Only qualified and registered pharmacy professionals can dispense medication to patients for legitimate health reasons. However, there are individuals who try to operate outside the legal framework for their own gain and their actions pose a serious health threat to the public and this has potential to tarnish the image of the profession.

No person shall compound or dispense a medicine unless he or she is authorised in terms of the Pharmacy Act. Thus, members of the public are urged report any fraudulent and suspicious pharmaceutical activities anonymously to the South African Pharmacy Council through customercare@sapc.org.za or 0861 7272 00.

The public is invited to join the Pharmacy month webinar as follows:

Date: 05 September 2023

Time: from 19h00 to 20h30

Link: <https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/43a91304-572c-4c26-8ee9-dad32deda699@f4b0f21f-fc43-4b5a-a69d-7395940629ef>

To participate and show support for the campaign, use the following hashtags:

#pharmacymonth2023
#pharmacyunited
#knowyourpharmacist
#askyourpharmacist

For more information and media enquiries, please contact:

Mr Foster Mohale
Health Departmental Spokesperson
0724323792
Foster.mohale@health.gov.za

Mr Doctor Tshwale
Spokesperson for Health Minister
063 657 8487
Doctor.Tshwale@health.gov.za

Madimetja Mashishi
Manager: Communication and Media
073 821 5994
Madimetja.Mashishi@sapc.za.org

Jackie Maimim
ICPA - Independent Community Pharmacy Association
jackie@icpa.co.za
082 574 6343

Anri Hornsveld
PSSA - Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa
anri@pssa.org.za
082 859 4002