



SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONS

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SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONS READY TO TAKE UP PRESIDENT'S CALL FOR ACTION ON COVID-19 EPIDEMIC

The South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP) appreciates the statement made by President Ramaphosa on 15 March 2020 and the measures that Cabinet has put in place to combat the COVID-19 epidemic. These measures are important to protect South African citizens as well as people from other countries within our borders, but most of all will play an important role to protect those most vulnerable and at risk, such as the elderly, children, people with compromised immune systems, among others.

'The Corona Virus presents us with a medical emergency that coincides with social and emotional challenges that impacts on the people of our country and the world' says Dr Maria Mabetoa, President of the SACSSP. 'During this time, it is important that social service professionals (social workers and child and youth care workers) join health care practitioners, nursing professionals and others to serve the nation', Mabetoa said.

'Social service professionals are the coalface of our communities and will play an important role to create awareness on prevention measures amongst the groups that they serve, while they are also ready to provide psychosocial support services as part of a multi-disciplinary response to those individuals infected with the Corona virus and their families', explains Langi Malamba, Registrar of the SACSSP. 'Our social workers and child and youth care workers are well trained and experienced to deal with the complexities that coincide with this type of emergency that impacts on individuals, families and communities, both at a response and a prevention level' says Malamba.

The SACSSP will publish information to support and guide social service professionals on its website within the next two days, which will contribute to their role together with professions in the national response to COVID-19. It will also draw from the experience of social service professionals in other countries such as China and Italy in this regard.

'Social service professionals can assist the communities they serve with practical information on how to protect themselves from infection, like regular handwashing, while also countering misinformation and unnecessary panic', says Mabetoa. 'We know 'social distancing' that deems necessary as part of the prevention measures will have an impact on psychosocial well-being of those affected, and our social service professionals, in collaboration with other professionals, will be able to provide the services to manage this where needed. We stand by the motto of the SACSSP '**Non Nobis**' (*not for ourselves*) while contributing to this '*most definitive Thuma Mina moment*' in our history' Mabetoa concluded.

ISSUED BY: SACSSP Communications

ENQUIRIES:

Lungelwa Mbuzo, Communications and Public Relations Practitioner

Office: +27 12 356 8300 | **Direct:** +27 12 356 8302 | **Email:** communications@sacssp.co.za

ABOUT THE SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SERVICE PROFESSIONS

The South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP/ Council) is a statutory body established in terms of section 2 of the Social Service Professions Act No. 110 of 1978 (the Act). Council has two professional boards under its auspices: the Professional Board for Social Work and the Professional Board for Child and Youth Care Work. Council, in conjunction with its two professional boards, guides and regulates the professions of social work and child youth care work in aspects pertaining to registration; education and training; professional conduct and ethical behaviour; ensuring continuing professional development; and fostering compliance with professional standards. It protects the integrity of the social service professions as well as the interest of the public at large. In order to safeguard the public and indirectly the professions, registration with Council in terms of the Act is a prerequisite before practising social work and child and youth care work. Registration is mandatory for social workers, social auxiliary workers, student social workers, student social auxiliary workers, child and youth care workers, auxiliary child and youth care workers, student child and youth care workers, and student auxiliary child and youth care workers.

