



**MINISTRY  
HEALTH  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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## **Media Release**

**18 April 2020**

As at today, the total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in South Africa is 3034.

The total number of tests conducted to date is 108 021.

The provincial breakdown is as follows:

GAUTENG	1101
WESTERN CAPE	836
KWAZULU – NATAL	604
EASTERN CAPE	270
FREE STATE	100
LIMPOPO	26
NORTH WEST	24
MPUMALANGA	25
NORTHERN CAPE	16
UNALLOCATED	32

## **REPORTING OF DEATHS**

We are saddened to report 2 new COVID-19 related deaths. The two deceased are from the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. This increases the total number of deaths to 52. We convey our condolences to the families and also appreciate the health workers who were treating the deceased patients.

## **OBSERVATION ON DECEASED PATIENTS**

The majority of the deceased patients have been elderly people and individuals who had comorbidities. This is consistent with the trends that we have seen worldwide. We therefore urge these vulnerable groups to adhere to their treatment regimens and maximise on staying at home.

## **FUNERALS**

We have observed that people who are attending funerals (even with the limited number of 50) are becoming at risk to contract COVID-19 because of the cultural behaviours or rituals that are performed at such funerals.

Social distancing remains one of the key strategies to curb this pandemic. Unfortunately, we have observed that people hug and hold each other at funerals (as part of giving comfort), they cry and cough next to each other, pass a spade to each other to pour the sand, they wash hands in one basin, and have a buffet meal where they use the same spoons to dish up.

We wish to warn South Africans, if you attend a funeral and practice any of the above behaviour, you are at risk to be infected to COVID-19. The reality is there could be one person at that funeral who is COVID-19 positive and may not be aware.

We emphasise that if you do not have to, do not attend a funeral. When you do, practice maximum hygiene, ie wash your hands, social distancing and wear a cloth mask.

## **TESTS**

We are very pleased that the number of tests being conducted on a daily basis has significantly increased. In fact, we take pride that in the whole of Africa, South Africa is leading in testing. We want to also emphasise that the daily tests that we report exclude repeat tests on one individual. A repeat test is done for confirmation or when a person tests to check their recovery. To illustrate this, today we report that we have conducted 108 021. However, the total tests done to date (including repeat tests) is 123 008.

We must also recognise that the reason for this increase in the past two weeks is due to the proactive approach of provinces to actively screen and test members of the community.

We are aware that some citizens have rejected our health workers when they approach them at their homes or in public places. We want to assure the public that testing for COVID-19 is for your own good and also for those you love and must protect.

Dr Zwelini Mkhize  
Minister of Health

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