



## **TRIBUTE TO HEALTHCARE WORKERS AND PROFESSIONALS BY THE PREMIER OF THE FREE STATE, S.H NTOMBELA**

Dearest compatriots in the fight against COVID-19,

The storm is upon us.

The cases of COVID-19 in the province, are escalating at an alarming rate which puts your lives and those you care about, in great danger. You are increasingly at the risk of contracting this virus, which continues to manifest itself in our communities.

This virus is now spreading in our communities due to community transmissions. We therefore call upon you, as the men and women in the forefront of waging a battle against this invisible enemy, to keep up the good fight. You are doing a sterling job, as the occasion demands, under difficult circumstances and challenging times.

You are, day in and day out, in the frontline of the war against COVID-19, and we reassure you that our



government is in full support of your concerted efforts, as you continue to save the lives of the masses of our people, who make their way to our various healthcare facilities, both public and private, in the province.

On behalf of our caring government, I send heartfelt condolences to all the families of our departed healthcare workers and professionals, and the families of departed citizens at large - that have lost their loved ones to this virus. I also wish a speedy recovery, to those infected throughout the province.

I take this opportunity to also reassure every citizen of this province, and indeed South Africans in general, that our government is working around the clock, to defeat COVID-19.

During the past few months, you, healthcare professionals, have displayed the highest form of courage in the ongoing battle against this virus.

You fine men and women in the healthcare profession, have placed the lives of your fellow brothers and sisters,



sons and daughters, mothers and fathers, above your own. You have lived up to their oath of protecting the lives of South Africans, and this you continue to do with the greatest level of commitment and excellence.

Unfortunately in any battle, there are bound to be casualties. This has certainly been the case in the Free State. We have, unfortunately, lost men and women who occupied the front lines in the war against COVID-19. The Department of Health, is in contact with all affected families to ensure that they receive all the necessary support during this pandemic and beyond.

Lastly, in preparation for the surge of COVID-19 cases in the province, we have been hard at work preparing additional sites to deal with the burden of those infected, such as the Pelonomi Hospital and the Universitas Academic Hospital. We also recently undertook a tour to the Bloemfontein Showgrounds, where a field hospital is currently being established.

It is now Women's Month, which is held under the theme, *"Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights for an Equal Future"*. Many of our frontline healthcare workers are



women, who, on a daily basis, leave the safety and comfort of their homes to wage a relentless war against the virus.

Let me assure you that your deeds are certainly been engraved in the history books of our nation. We thank you for shielding us from this deadly disease.

We thank you for your selfless dedication,

We thank you for your unconditional love.

Let us work together to defeat COVID-19. It is in our hands, and indeed, we shall overcome.

**Premier of the Free State,**

**Sefora Hixsonia Ntombela**

**11 August 2020**

ENDS.

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