

# NEWS BULLETIN

Official Newsletter of the Gauteng Department of Health

30 July 2023

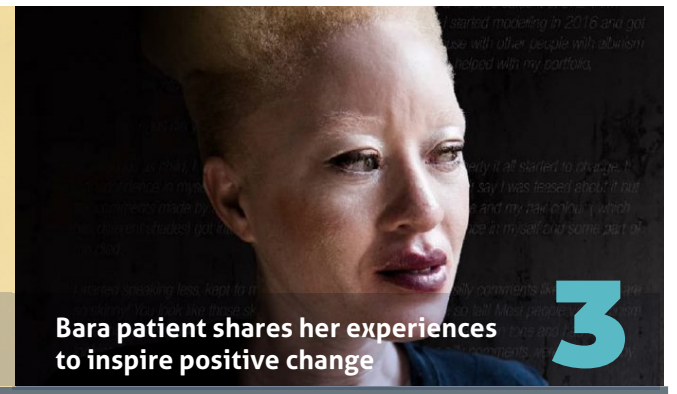


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## First sutureless aortic valve replacement in Africa

The Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital (CMJAH) made history this week (27 July) after performing the first minimally invasive sutureless or rapid deployment in the setting of aortic valve replacement in the African continent.

This major achievement was made possible by the CMJAH's Cardiothoracic Department and Wits University Medical School, in partnership with Vertice Medtech Group.

Sutureless or rapid deployment valves in the setting of aortic valve replacement is an emerging surgical procedure using the transcatheter valve technology. It shortens operation time, morbidity and length of hospital stay. The patient was fully awake within 6 hours of the procedure.

The surgical team was led by the visiting expert, Dr Slobodan Mićović, an Associate Professor of Surgery at the University of Belgrade Medical School in Serbia, and locally by Dr Itumeleng Taunyane, Head of Clinical Unit and Lead Surgeon - Minimally Invasive Cardiac Surgery and Dr Bongani Ngutshane, Consultant Cardiothoracic Surgeon.

Prof Mićović is one of the world-renowned cardiac surgeons who runs over 2 500 cases per annum with about 705 done through minimally invasive means.

The surgical team spent the whole day in theatre working on the two groundbreaking cases. One of the beneficiaries of this procedure is a 64-year-old male who was initially considered for transcatheter aortic valve implantation (TAVI), but instead, a possibility of rapid deployment valve was discussed with him and he gladly accepted.

Prof Mićović was impressed with the CMJAH surgical team and their level of professionalism. "We operated patients with a fantastic device with very good long-term durability. It was not complicated to implant, and it is user-friendly with very good hemodynamics."

The sutureless or rapid deployment in the setting of aortic valve implantation is an adjunct or additional armamentarium for mitigating costs and expanding the scope of care for patients who are also considered for but don't fully meet the criteria for TAVI. It is done at a fraction of the cost to TAVI and

The successful operation comes hot on the heels of the department having carried out over 700 successful surgical procedures on Mandela Day. It is part of the continuous efforts to improve efficiencies across our centres of excellence.

**"#AsibeHealthyGP"**



MEC for Health and Wellness, Nomantu Nkomo-Ralehoko together with other Gauteng Members of the Executive Council (MECs) joined Premier Panyaza Lesufi on Thursday, 27 July 2023 at Orlando Stadium for the awarding of appointment letters to 6 000 young people who will be trained as solar technicians.

The training programme is part of the Nasi iSpani campaign which is aimed at combating unemployment in Gauteng. The Gauteng government has partnered with the Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Education and Training Authority (merSETA) to train the appointees.

also at the fraction of time to conventional Cardiopulmonary bypass aortic valve replacement (CPB-AVR) procedure.

Currently, CMJAH is doing TAVI for high-risk patients through percutaneous techniques making it the only state hospital outside of the Western Cape to offer this therapy.

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# New Midwife Obstetrics Unit welcomed by community



Mazithi Mpayipheli, is an expectant mother who is due to give birth to her first baby at the newly opened state-of-the-art Midwife Obstetrics Unit (MOU) at Phillip Moyo Community Healthcare Centre.

Mpayipheli was among hundreds of community members from Etwatwa and Daveyton who on Thursday (27 July) could not hide their joy at the opening of the MOU. "I am so excited that I will be delivering my baby at this new facility. This clinic is so clean and beautiful, and the nurses are so friendly and helpful. One would think that it is a private facility."

MEC for Health and Wellness, Nomantu Nkomo-Ralehoko unveiled the facility and officially handed it over to the visibly jubilant community. The facility boasts a delivery section with four en-suite labour rooms which allows for privacy and for partners to be present during delivery. It also has an admission room with two beds, a latent phase room with six beds and a postnatal room with 10 beds. It also has a mother and child section with two antenatal care beds and a sonar room.

As part of efforts to ease pressure at Far East Rand and Pholosong hospitals, the MOU is equipped with cutting edge medical equipment which include defibrillator, hemoglobin meter,

portable resuscitator, ultrasound machine, two manual resuscitators for adults and infants, and warmers amongst others.

MEC Nkomo-Ralehoko said that the opening of the MOU marks a significant step forward in enhancing healthcare services for the communities of Etwatwa and Daveyton.

"This facility boasts separate rooms for admission and delivery, ensuring a more comfortable, dignified and safer environment for our expectant mothers. These dedicated spaces not only provide the necessary privacy but also facilitate better infection control measures, thereby reducing the risk of complications during childbirth.

"With improved facilities, our healthcare professionals can deliver their services more efficiently and effectively, ensuring that each woman receives the care and attention she rightfully deserves," said MEC Nkomo-Ralehoko.

The MOU is offering 24-hour services to ensure that emergencies and any health concerns are immediately attended. It has highly trained midwives and healthcare professionals who will be able to provide specialised care during childbirth, ensuring safe and comfortable deliveries.

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One of the midwives at the MOU, Sister Evidence Maifo said that the newly built facility is already boosting staff morale and will help yield great outcomes. "We have some of the most crucial medical equipment in this facility and a lot of room to work. Through this new facility, we will be able to provide quality maternal health services to our community members," said Maifo.

In addition, the MOU also has a counselling room, an exercise room, a sexual reproductive health room, a baby change room, vital signs room and a Department of Home Affairs office for immediate registration of new-born babies

# Police prioritise cases of attacks against healthcare workers

A team of detectives led by a senior officer has been established to investigate cases of attacks against healthcare workers and ensure that suspects are brought to book.

This was confirmed by the Gauteng South African Police Service (SAPS) in the wake of two incidents of ambulance hijackings and robbery in Nellmapius and Saulsville in Tshwane this past week. Crews from the Gauteng Emergency Medical Services (EMS) were robbed while responding to "distress calls" in two separate but similar incidents leading to wide condemnation of the attacks on healthcare workers.

"All the cases have been escalated to the provincial office and a dedicated team has been assigned to work on this. We are appealing to anyone who might have information that can help in the investigation or assist in the apprehension of the suspects to report to their local SAPS," said Gauteng SAPS Spokesperson, Lieutenant Colonel Mavela Masondo.

In the Saulsville incident, the EMS crew from Kalafong Provincial Tertiary Hospital was dispatched to Saulsville on Sunday night (23 July 2023) after registering a call of a "diabetic coma patient". While the crew was looking for the physical address of the reported patient, a white Toyota Avanza blocked



them. The perpetrators in the vehicle pulled out firearms and forced the crew into the Avanza.

Both crew members were taken to a shack where they were tied up and the perpetrators fled scene with their personal belonging. The crew managed to free themselves later and the abandoned ambulance was discovered by the patrolling SAPS.

In another incident, the Gauteng EMS crew were hijacked, kidnapped, assaulted and robbed of their personal cell phones and other working tools while responding to what appeared to be a distress call from Nellmapius near Mamelodi township. The criminals also used their cards to withdraw money. This happened on Saturday, 22 July 2023 in the early hours of the morning.

The Gauteng Department of Health (GDoH) has condemned in the strongest terms, the continued targeting of healthcare workers when discharging their duties in communities by criminals who rob them of their belongings.

The two incidents follow a separate one that happened three weeks ago when two Dark City

Community Healthcare Centre workers were robbed of their belongings while executing their duties in the community of Ekangala by two assailants who were driving in a grey VW Polo vehicle.

"We are taking additional steps to beef up the security of our health personnel. One attack is one too many. We already have areas that are now declared hot zones meaning that our personnel are not able to access them to render needed health services unless they have police or security escort. "This cannot go on unabated. We welcome the move by the SAPS to have a dedicated team look into these cases so that we can arrest the criminals who are behind these attacks," explains MEC Nkomo-Ralehoko.

The GDoH once again appeals to communities to work with law enforcement agencies to report any information that might assist the police to bring perpetrators to book.

The public is encouraged to call the investigating officer with information that might assist the police on these cases. The investigating officer is Warrant Officer Eddy Sithole and he can be reached on 082 775 0369.

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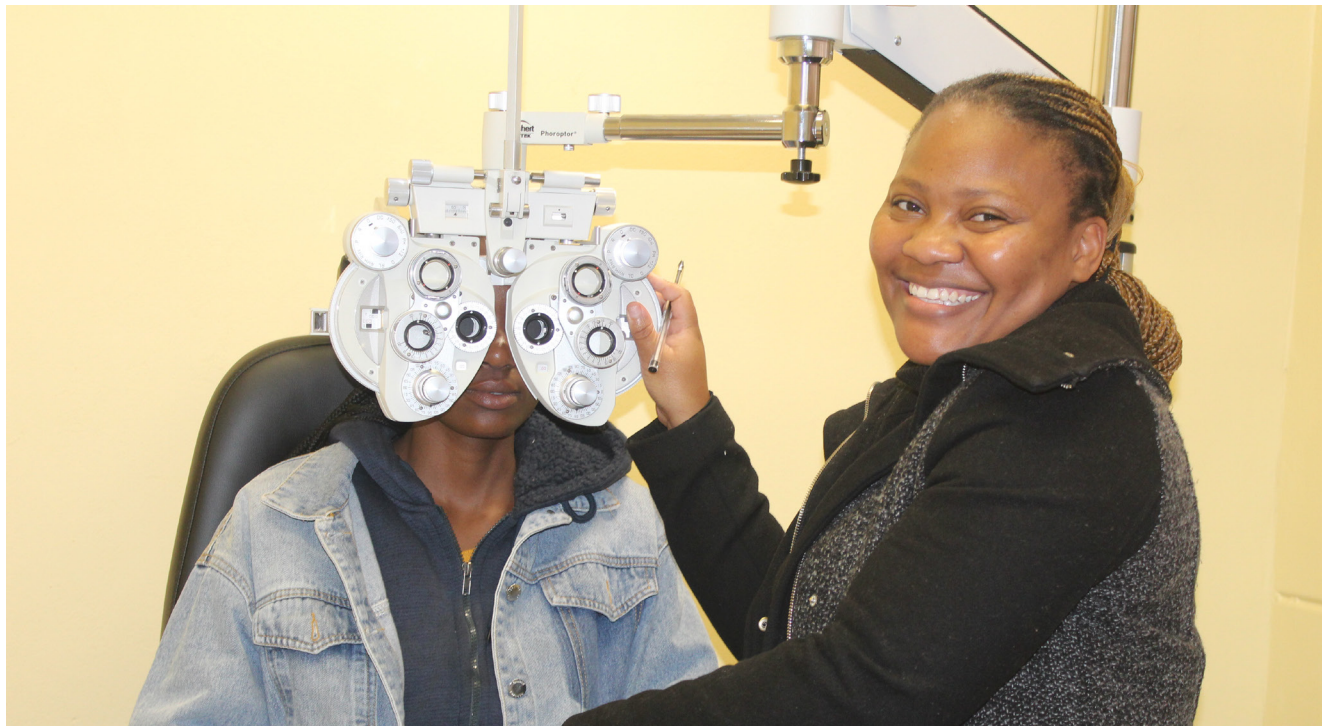
## Eye care services brought closer to communities

Phumza Ntuthuka

Communities of Springs and Brakpan will no longer have to travel long distances to access eye care health services. This comes after the Far East Rand District Hospital opened an Eye Clinic boasting state-of-the-art equipment that has allowed the facility to offer comprehensive eye care services which include screening, diagnosis and treatment of various eye complications.

Currently, the clinic is in its infancy phase with primary health eye care services. However, if after diagnosis a patient is found to have severe eye complications, they are referred to a higher care facility for further treatment and management. The hospital intends soon offer Ophthalmology services as a matter which will allow the hospital to perform eye surgery, instead of referring.

Yonela Khumalo, one of the first patients to receive eye care services at the newly opened



clinic could not hold her excitement as she was about to get the services closer to where she lives.

"I am constantly having eye complications and for the longest time I have had to use money that I sometimes do not have to travel to other facilities for eye care services. I am happy that the Far East Rand Hospital is now rendering this critical service to many in our community. We will save money while getting the best service," said Khumalo.

The hospital has partnered with OneSight South Africa, an independent nonprofit organisation that is committed to eradicating vision care crisis.

The CEO of the hospital, Sonwabo Lindani said that "the clinic is bringing much relief to patients who previously had to be referred to other institutions for eye care services."

The clinic operates from 08h00 until 16h00 during the week. The public is encouraged to visit their local clinic or community healthcare centre first in order to get a referral to the clinic.

## EYE CARE AWARENESS



If you have visual problems and complications, visit your nearest healthcare centre, to have eyes tested and treated.



## Bara patient shares her experiences to inspire positive change

Koketso Maraba

Despite having to overcome adversities on all sides, Regina Mary Ndlovu, still manages to encourage others to take positive action in their lives. The young motivational speaker uses her own life experience as a reference point in her engagements with her audience. Ndlovu is working through the trauma of rape, discrimination as an Albino, illiteracy, the impact of climate change on her skin, HIV and AIDS, and depression.

As a child, Mary was deprived of learning to read and write due to her poor eyesight. She was raped 15 times since she was eight and attempted to commit suicide 11 times due to depression. She is also suffering from the repercussions of not having access to adequate

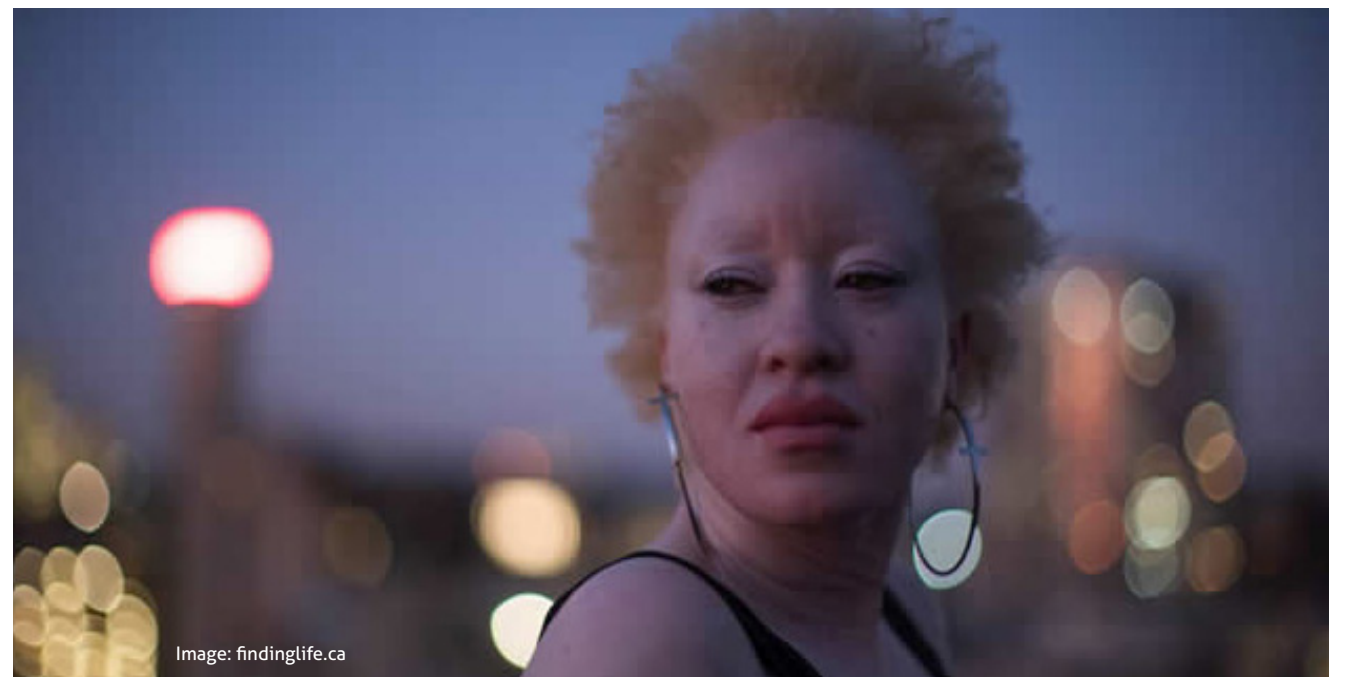


Image: findinglife.ca

skin care products to protect her skin from sun damage.

"My life challenges and my religious belief have molded me into the woman I am today. Having overcome being rejected by society and suffering from sexual violence, I am living proof that it is not how you start, but how you choose to end your story that matters," says Ndlovu.

As a result of her skin's exposure to the sun, she developed sores on her ear and chest, which she took note of after a friend alerted her that it could be cancerous. She hastily visited the doctor and was diagnosed with Basal Cell Carcinoma (BCC) skin cancer at Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital

(CHBAH). The hospital managed to surgically extract the sores by removing all of the cancer and some of the healthy tissue around it. She is currently recovering and receiving treatment at the facility.

Ndlovu says her journey with CHBAH does not end here as she continues to monitor any other signs of cancer and attends counseling sessions at the hospital, where she also shares her journey with others to inspire them to persevere no matter what life throws at them. She recently shared her experiences at the 11th South African AIDS conference held in Durban in June which left many in the audience admiring her bravery and her will to rewrite the story of her life.



# What are the signs/symptoms of mental illness?



Mental Illness is a positive diagnosis of changes in one's thinking, memory, perception, feeling and judgement resulting in changes in talk and behaviour. The changes in behaviour cause distress and suffering to the individual or others which may lead to disturbance in day-to-day activities, work and relationships.

Visit your nearest clinic as the point of entry for mental health services in the province. All health facilities provide mental health services at all levels of care. The entry point is primary health care services which are accessible in all districts.



**MATTERS TO US!**



"You are doing a great job. A neighbour of mine had a successful cataract procedure a few weeks ago. He was like a little child when he came back home and could see us. He was filled with joy and excitement of having to see again. Continue to serve our community with dignity and diligence!"

**Hazel Nokulunga Mthembu**

on Facebook

"The Gauteng Department of Health is ready for the National Health Insurance (NHI). I have had the best treatment at some of the facilities, and this was something I needed at the time. Though the queuing, and customer care will need to improve. The best specialists, counseling, medication and medical support."

**Virginia Mokone**

on Facebook.

\* Letter grammatically edited


**QUALITY ASSURANCE CONTACT US!**



For any **hospital or clinic complaints** please **contact** the **Gauteng Department of Health** on the **24-hour customer line** on.

 **0800 203 886** (Toll free number)

 **patients.health@gauteng.gov.za** or **support@gauteng.gov.za**

 **SMS : 35023**

For letters, contribution and suggestion contact [GDoHstories@gauteng.gov.za](mailto:GDoHstories@gauteng.gov.za)

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