



Cancer treatment a priority



Young women trained as first responders



CMSA platinum anniversary



Health workers empowered to save more lives during emergencies

Timely access to quality emergency care can reduce avoidable death and disability by up to 50%, according to the World Health Organisation.

In response to this urgent need, healthcare professionals from across Gauteng gathered at Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University in Ga-Rankuwa on Wednesday, 20 August, for the province’s inaugural Advanced Airway Management Symposium.

This vital initiative, attended by Gauteng MEC for Health and Wellness Nomantu Nkomo-Ralehoko, was designed to empower doctors, nurses, and paramedics with life-saving emergency care skills, particularly in airway management during trauma and resuscitation.

The symposium offered hands-on training in opening blocked airways, performing emergency procedures, and using the latest equipment to assist patients in breathing during life-threatening situations such as accidents, heart attacks, and critical injuries.

“Airway management is not just a technical skill; it is the difference between saving a life and losing it. Every clinician who leaves here today more confident and better prepared is another step toward a health system our people can trust in their darkest hour,” said MEC Nkomo-Ralehoko.

The symposium was a collaborative effort between Gauteng Health Emergency Management Services,

Lebone College of Emergency Care, Dr George Mukhari Academic Hospital, Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University, and private sector partners. This partnership brought together expertise and resources to strengthen emergency care across the province, ensuring that healthcare workers remain equipped with the latest techniques and research in a safe, practical environment.

Further strengthening Gauteng’s emergency response capabilities, the Gauteng EMS has introduced ICU ambulances equipped with advanced life support systems and specialised airway management tools.

These mobile intensive care units feature ventilators, endotracheal tubes, suction devices, bag-valve masks, surgical cricothyrotomy kits, and alternative airway devices such as laryngeal mask airways. These tools empower paramedics to secure and manage airways effectively during transport, even in the most critical scenarios.

In addition to ICU ambulances, all primary response vehicles and ambulances in the province meet, and in many cases exceed, the minimum equipment requirements as outlined in EMS regulations. This ensures that emergency teams are consistently prepared to deliver high-quality care from the moment they arrive on scene.

By investing in both training and technology, the GDoH is reinforcing its commitment to building a responsive and resilient healthcare system, one that saves lives when every second counts.



MEC for Health and Wellness, Nomantu Nkomo-Ralehoko, joined high school girls from Ekurhuleni at the Dr Clarence Mini Hall at Bertha Gxowa Hospital in Germiston to celebrate Women’s Day under the theme “Building Resilient Economies for All.” The celebration focused on “Empowered to Thrive: Prioritising Health and Wellbeing in Our Teenage Years”. It highlighted the importance of adolescent health and encouraged learners to make use of government services such as Adolescent Youth Friendly Services and the Integrated School Health Programme, which offer support for contraception, STI screening, mental health, and gender-based violence.



MEC for Health and Wellness, Nomantu Nkomo-Ralehoko, walking alongside the Vaal Women in Prayer, a movement of women who pray, who heal, who protect, who build, and who lead with purpose and compassion.

As the convener of Faith-Based Organisations, MEC Nkomo-Ralehoko continues to champion the power of unity in the sector and community wellness. The Gauteng Department of Health team proudly supported the Vaal Women in Prayer by providing essential health services, including health screenings, educational talks, and wellness support.

By investing in both training and technology, the GDoH is reinforcing its commitment to building a responsive and resilient healthcare system, one that saves lives when every second counts.

Commitment to ensure ongoing cancer treatment

The Gauteng Department of Health (GDoH) has acknowledged the recent judgment delivered by the Gauteng High Court regarding the provision of radiation oncology services to cancer patients. The Department is currently in the process of carefully studying the ruling to fully appreciate its contents and implications. Once this review has been concluded, the Department will determine and communicate the appropriate course of action.

In reaffirming its commitment to ensuring access to quality healthcare services, the GDoH has already taken significant steps to improve cancer and oncology treatment across the province.

Recognising the urgency of addressing long waiting times for radiotherapy, the Department allocated funds to outsource radiotherapy services to private healthcare providers. This initiative prioritises patients with prostate and breast cancer, who previously faced delays.

To streamline care, patients are assessed at Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital and Steve Biko Academic Hospital before being referred to private facilities for treatment. Upon completion, they are reintegrated into the public health system, ensuring continuity and comprehensive care.



As the beginning of August 2025, 563 patients were receiving radiation oncology care through private partnerships, while 1 076 patients had completed treatment by end of July 2025.

Infrastructure development is also underway, with new radiotherapy centres being constructed at Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital and Dr George Mukhari Academic Hospital. These facilities are expected to significantly expand treatment capacity and improve accessibility for patients in underserved areas.

In addition, the Department has invested in upgrading medical equipment across its facilities to improve diagnostic accuracy and treatment precision.

The GDoH remains committed to engaging all relevant stakeholders in addressing matters affecting patient care. These ongoing efforts

As the beginning of August 2025, 563 patients were receiving radiation oncology care through private partnerships, while 1 076 patients had completed treatment by end of July 2025. ”

underscore the Department’s dedication to building a responsive, equitable, and people-centred healthcare system that meets the needs of cancer patients with urgency, dignity, and compassion.



Ekurhuleni nurse breaks gender norms

Thobeka Makhubela

For Tebogo Molefe, a dedicated nurse at Tsakani Old Clinic in the Ekurhuleni District Health Services, nursing has meant breaking gender stereotypes and earning respect in spaces traditionally dominated by men.

Every day, Molefe performs Voluntary Medical Male Circumcision (VMMC), a role few women occupy. With over 15 years of experience in the field, she began her VMMC journey in 2010 at Nokuthela Ngwenya Community Health Centre. In 2022, she was assigned to Tsakani Old Clinic, where she now serves as the VMMC site supervisor, leading the programme with dedication and expertise.

Molefe’s nursing career began in 2007 at Ann Latsky Nursing College, qualifying as an Enrolled Nurse in 2009. In 2013, she returned to further her studies and completed her Registered Nursing qualification in 2015. Her commitment to self-development led her to specialise in Midwifery in 2021, successfully obtaining her qualification the same year.

Over the years, she has completed several short courses to sharpen her skills, including Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission (PMTCT), Nurse-Initiated Management of Antiretroviral Therapy (NIMART), Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI), and Voluntary Medical Male Circumcision (VMMC)—all of which have prepared her well for the important work she does today.

Like any job, Molefe faces challenges. One of the biggest obstacles is gender-based discrimination. “One of the hardest parts of my job is being treated unfairly because I’m a woman,” Molefe explains.

“Some older men doubt my ability to perform circumcisions, while others make rude comments or say I’m the dominant partner in my marriage. But I don’t let such comments distract me. I remain focused on providing every patient with the best care possible.”

In such moments, Molefe chooses grace and professionalism over confrontation. “I respond with humility. I take the opportunity to educate

them—explaining medical protocols, ethical guidelines, cultural considerations, and the Batho Pele principles that guide our work. I also remind them that while men are respected as heads of families, my role is to ensure the health and safety of our community, which is something we all value,” she says.

“The best part of my job is successfully performing the VMMC procedure and assisting clients when they experience complications,” she adds. “It’s fulfilling to see them satisfied with the service, especially those who were hesitant at first. Some even come back just to thank me.”

One of Molefe’s most rewarding moments was helping an asthmatic patient who accidentally entered the VMMC clinic during an attack. She administered oxygen and called for an ambulance. Days later, the patient called to thank her for saving his life.

“Such moments remind me why I chose and love my career. It’s not about rewards - it’s about doing the right thing and touching people with my healing hands,” she says proudly.

Despite the demanding nature of her role, Molefe is also dedicated to her responsibilities at home. “I’m a mother first, so I always make sure my family is taken care of while giving my best at work,” she says. “It’s not always easy, but I believe in finding balance. Sometimes, even outside the clinic, people stop me to thank me or refer others—and that’s when I truly see the difference this work makes in people’s lives.”

Programme Manager Siphesihle Mnyandu also shared positive feedback about Molefe’s leadership and impact at the site. “Molefe takes full responsibility for her role and has shown strong accountability in overseeing the VMMC site. Since she took over, we’ve seen noticeable improvements, and the clinic is now performing well and moving closer to reaching its targets,” stated Mnyandu.

Empowerment for women in health

Koketso Maraba

Teach them while they are still young. That is the key to building strong, confident women who will lead the future. As Women’s Month continues, the Gauteng Department of Health brought together young nurses at Ann Latsky Nursing College on 21 August 2025 to celebrate their strength, dedication, and potential.

This event focused on empowering these young women with vital lessons in financial literacy, self-defence, and navigating life’s many challenges. All of these were taught under the national theme of building resilient economies for all. The aim was not only to recognise the important role women play in healthcare but also to equip the next generation of nurses with the tools they need to succeed both personally and professionally.

MEC for Health and Wellness, Nomantu Nkomo-Ralehoko, reminded them that nursing is far more than just a job—it is a calling that requires courage, empathy, and strong leadership. She urged the young nurses to stand firm in their journey and to support one another as they grow into future leaders of South Africa’s healthcare system.

A key part of the day was the practical self-defence training delivered by Lieutenant Radebe from Brixton Police Station. She explained the true meaning of self-defence, teaching the young women how to protect themselves safely and responsibly. Lieutenant Radebe emphasised that self-defence is about using only the necessary force to stay safe and avoid harm, highlighting the importance of being aware of one’s surroundings and knowing how to respond to threats without escalating violence.

Financial literacy was another important topic addressed during the event. Motlatjo Nkadameng from Old Mutual guided the students through the basics of managing their money wisely. She spoke about the importance of building a good credit profile from an early age and making responsible financial decisions. Her advice included practical tips on how to start saving, invest carefully, and maintain consistent repayment habits for financial independence and stability.



Building resilient economies through healthcare depends on women knowing their worth and demanding respect. She encouraged women to pursue equality actively and to empower each other.”

“It was a real privilege to attend the Women’s Day celebration today. I walked away with valuable insights like how crucial self-care is and the real benefits it brings, the importance of being financially responsible, and the empowering truth about self-defence. As a young woman, it was such an eye-opening and educational experience,” reflected Mbali Thenjekwayo, a student at the nursing college.

In addition to the event at Ann Latsky Nursing College, MEC Nkomo-Ralehoko also participated in a Women’s Month fun walk at Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital on 22 August 2025. The walk honoured Women’s Day and brought together dedicated women from the hospital community. It served as a powerful reminder that when women are empowered, entire communities benefit. As women rise, families thrive, healthcare systems strengthen, and economic growth follows. MEC Nkomo-Ralehoko stressed that building resilient economies through healthcare depends on women knowing their worth and demanding respect. She encouraged women to pursue equality actively and to empower each other.

Together, these events showcased the strength, resilience, and potential of women in healthcare and society. They remind us that empowering women, especially from a young age, is essential to building a healthier, stronger Gauteng and a brighter future for all.



Young women trained as first responders in Devland

Koketso Maraba

As part of Women’s Month, the Gauteng Department of Health is uplifting and empowering young women through practical initiatives that change lives.

On Friday, 22 August 2025, MEC for Health and Wellness, Nomantu Nkomo-Ralehoko, visited Devland in Johannesburg to show her support for the First Responder Training Programme, which is helping to build safer communities.

A total of 193 young women were trained through the programme, gaining essential skills to respond to emergencies, save lives, and support their communities when it matters most.

The training, offered by Lebone College of Emergency Care, equips participants with critical life-saving skills. These include performing CPR, assisting individuals during seizures, treating burns, sprains, and strains, helping fall victims, and managing stab or gunshot wounds. The course prepares them to act quickly and responsibly during medical emergencies, often before professional help arrives.

The programme also builds confidence, leadership, and a sense of responsibility. The young women learned how to stay calm under pressure, make quick decisions, and care for others with compassion and skill.

To celebrate their achievement, MEC Nkomo-Ralehoko handed over certificates to the graduates, recognising their hard work and marking the beginning of their journey as community lifesavers.

MEC Nkomo-Ralehoko highlighted the impact of empowering women. She said, “When women are trained to lead and respond, they help build resilient families and neighbourhoods. This programme is about more than first aid; it is about giving young women the power to protect, lead, and inspire.”

“I learned how to attend to a sick person at home and how to respond to someone who has been burned. The training was very insightful, and now I know what to do during an emergency while waiting for an ambulance to arrive. I will carry this knowledge with me to assist other people at home,” shared Nontshindiso Ngcongo.

Thembi Khosa also expressed her appreciation for the opportunity. She said, “It was very helpful because we learned how to do CPR. What I had the opportunity to learn has opened my eyes to new opportunities, and this looks like a course I am interested in enrolling in.”

By supporting initiatives such as this one, the Gauteng Department of Health is making Women’s Month meaningful, impactful, and focused on action. Training 193 young women in Devland is an investment in a safer, stronger, and more empowered future, where women lead with skill and confidence.

Seven decades of impactful contribution to medical education and practice

The Gauteng MEC for Health and Wellness, Nomantu Nkomo-Ralehoko, has paid tribute to the Colleges of Medicine of South Africa (CMSA) as it celebrates 70 years of shaping the future of healthcare through specialist training, academic excellence, and professional integrity. The platinum anniversary marks a significant milestone in the organisation’s longstanding contribution to medical education and practice in South Africa.

Speaking on the second day of the CMSA 70th Anniversary Conference, held at the University of Pretoria’s Future Africa Campus, MEC Nkomo-Ralehoko praised the CMSA for its unwavering commitment to advancing specialist medicine, conducting rigorous examinations, and upholding the highest standards of medical practice in South Africa and across the continent.

“The CMSA has been a trusted partner to the Gauteng Department of Health for many years. Through our central hospitals that include Chris Hani Baragwanath, Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg, Steve Biko, and Dr George Mukhari, we provide clinical platforms that make specialist training possible. Together, we have trained generations of doctors who continue to serve with excellence,” said Nkomo-Ralehoko.

She emphasised the importance of this partnership in addressing the shortage of



specialists in critical fields such as Neonatology, Psychiatry, and Paediatrics, particularly as Gauteng continues to prioritise mother, child, and mental health services.

The MEC also acknowledged the CMSA’s unique nonprofit model, which is powered by the dedication of more than 11 000 volunteers. She described it as a powerful example of collaboration in pursuit of universal health coverage and a more equitable healthcare system.

“On behalf of the Gauteng Department of Health, I congratulate the CMSA on its platinum anniversary. We remain committed to working hand in hand with you to ensure that specialist medicine continues to grow, transform, and serve the people of our province and our country,” she concluded.

We remain committed to working hand in hand with you to ensure that specialist medicine continues to grow, transform, and serve the people of our province and our country.”
~MEC Nkomo-Ralehoko



A heartfelt thank you to Sister Kagiso at Winnie Mandela Clinic

I hope this email finds you well. I’m writing to express my gratitude for the outstanding service I received from one of your employees at Winnie Mandela Clinic in Tembisa.

I first met Sister Katlego on 20 March during my sonar appointment. She later moved to the Antenatal Care unit in April, and since then, she has been nothing short of amazing. I’ve consistently experienced her professionalism, friendliness, kindness, and vibrant demeanour during each of my follow-up visits.

I truly applaud her for doing an exceptional job as a nurse.

If the department approves, I would love to send her a token of appreciation for the love she shows in her work.

Thank you,
Brilliant Maloka

* Letter grammatically edited

For letters, contribution and suggestion contact GDoHstories@gauteng.gov.za
For more information on Gauteng Department of Health programmes, News and other information, visit our social media pages:

