CATHCA

CATHOLIC HEALTH CARE ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER - MARCH 2023

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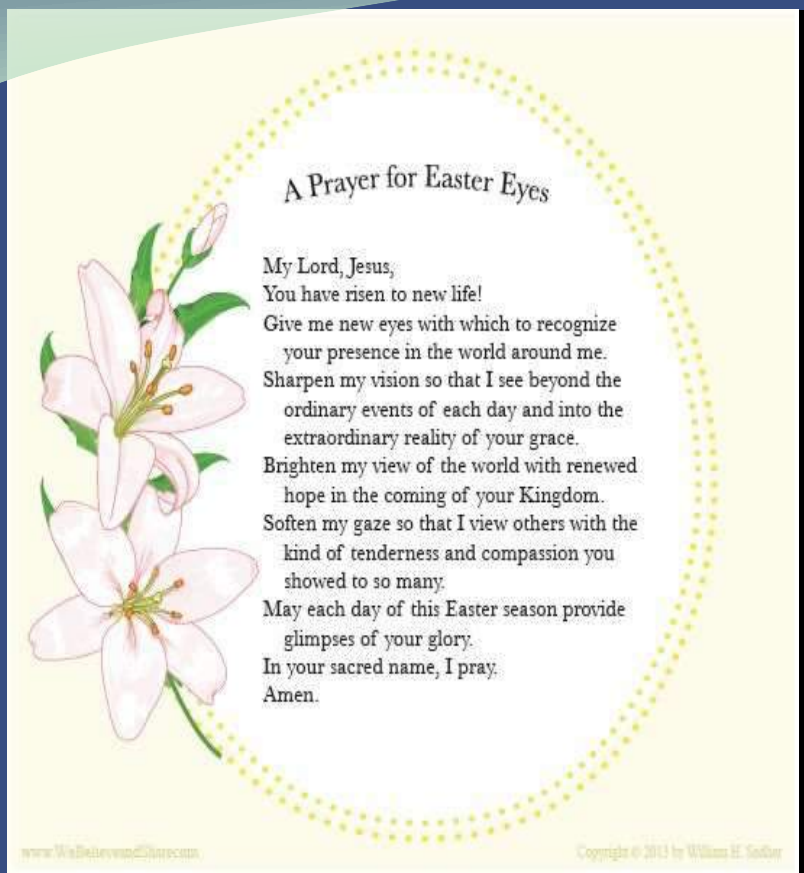

PARISH MENTAL HEALTH MINISTRY

In the DIOCESE of KLERKSDORP

The Catholic Diocese of Klerksdorp becomes the second Diocese in the Episcopal Conference of South Africa to welcome Parish Mental Health Ministry. In 2022 the Ministry was introduced in the Archdiocese of Johannesburg. On the 29th of January at the presence of CATHCA'S Skills Development Coordinator (Melese Shula) and Fr Cornelius (Parish Priest) St Peter's Parish of Juberton officially and joyfully welcomed the Ministry. St Peter's Parish is one of the four parishes in the Diocese that will be supported by CATHCA in 2023 in the process of the implementation of the Ministry.

On Saturday 4 March discussions were held at St Peter's Parish in Klerksdorp diocese on how to fight stigma associated with mental health illness.

St Peter's Parish

OUR CATHCA MEMBER -

INKANYEZI HIV/AIDS ORGANIZATION

UNDERSTANDING VIOLENCE

Inkanyezi hosted a community dialogue with the leaners of Charles Lwanga where different types of abuse were discussed: emotional, financial and physical. This topic triggered many emotions for the students several of whom were open to sharing their past journeys of abuse and some who are currently in abusive relationships.

They were grateful for the opportunity as they were made aware of the different kinds of abuse people can inflict, particularly in a situation where someone has power over them. They had thought it normal to be in the relationship were someone with financial power is able to use material things to control you.

Inkanyezi also shared information on where they could go to reach out for assistance.

HEALTH LIFESTYLE AWARENESS DAY : 17 FEBRUARY 2023

Being healthy is not just about eating a health meal every now and again and hitting the gym once a month. Being healthy means following a healthy lifestyle, and with February being Healthy Lifestyle Awareness Month., we shared some tips to help you get healthier - and stay that way

The theme for the South African 2023 Healthy Lifestyle campaign is Cheka Impilo – "**Have peace of mind".** How do you go about doing that? Try to take small steps to improve your health for a healthier and happier you**.** Here are a few things you can do today:

1. Drink more water – drink 6-8 glasses of clean, safe water every day. Try to avoid sugary drinks or favoured waters which can lead to an energy overload and weight gain.

2. Get enough sleep – good quality sleep can help imp rove stress levels and maintain a healthy body and healthy weight.

3. Exercise daily – physical inactivity is a major risk factor for non-communicable diseases such as hypertension. Aim to add more steps into your day or take the stairs instead of using a lift – every step counts.

4. Eat more fruits and vegetables – these are rich sources of vitamins and minerals as well as dietary fibre. Try to get in 5 servings of fruit and vegetables daily.

But being healthy is not just about eating enough fruit and vegetables. It's also about relaxing and spending quality time with your loved ones as this contributes to an overall healthy lifestyle and well=being.

The key to embarking on a healthy lifestyle is to start small. Making a small change to your diet and being able to maintain it can go a long way. We all have something that we can adjust in our diets and lifestyles.

Make it fun by challenging your friends or colleagues on who can achieve the greatest number of steps in a day. Try a new form of exercise, dance in the kitchen, use herbs instead of salt to flavour your food, choose chicken or fish over red meat, have a meatless Monday, take a moment to be outside, get up from your desk and talk to humans instead of texting, borrow a dog for a run. There are so many different options just do something!

If you want to add more exercise into your daily routine and are concerned about any health issues you may have, please consult your doctor.

For healthier lifestyle tips visit:
http://www.sun.ac.za/english/Lists/news/DispForm.aspx?ID=7130#:~:text=Try%20a%20new%20form%20of,a%20dog%20for%20a%20run

NEW CATHCA PROJECT - 2023

SCALING UP COVID-19 VACCINE ROLLOUT

A one-year project funded by the **Catholic Relief Services** to scale up community-based, person-centred strategies that strengthen COVID-19 vaccine rollout in disadvantaged areas of the Mpumalanga Province during the course of 2023.

The key strategies of the project are:

- Leverage the influence of trusted **faith-based networks**, traditional health practitioners, and community groups in support of the Department of Health's COVID-19 vaccination programme, without setting up parallel systems.
- Work out coordinated measures that **bridge the distance between vaccine seekers and vaccination sites** and strive to leave no one behind—this involves integrating COVID-19 vaccination into primary health care activities carried out by public health facilities and outreach teams with a view to normalize COVID-19 vaccination in the target communities while reaching out to socio-economically disadvantaged individuals and those who are most at risk of developing serious illness from COVID-19.
- The project entails empowering locally-based **Vaccine Ambassadors** with COVID-19 vaccine literacy and effective strategies to support COVID-19 vaccine rollout. It will reach out to priority sub-districts and **areas of interest** such as schools, workplaces, community centers, churches/faith assemblies, informal settlements, mining/rural areas identified in collaboration with the Department of Health.

World Hearing Day is held on 3 March each year to raise awareness on how to prevent deafness and hearing loss, improve hearing care and take action to address the associated problems and promote ear and hearing care across the world.

HOW CAN WE HELP?

On this health event WHO seeks to ascertain the need for prompt detection and the right treatment for hearing loss. As most people have undiagnosed hearing problems and this initiative can help those people in managing the issue and improve their hearing function

...AND HOW CAN WE IMPROVE?

Here are 4 powerful nutrients to Improve Ear Health:

Magnesium is one of the vital minerals that aid sustain nerve function and safeguards the hair cells in the inner ear when subjected to loud noises. It also improves blood flow, while a deficiency of magnesium can lead to oxygen deprivation. Thus, to keep your ears healthy and protect against hearing loss eat foods laden with magnesium.

Sources: dark chocolate, nuts and seeds, whole grains, avocados, spinach, kale, legumes, and bananas.

Potassium - Low levels of fluid in the inner ear can lead to hearing loss, however, supplementing potassium in the diet can help to regulate the fluid balance in the system. As you age, potassium levels may drop, so ensure to add foods abundant in potassium to your meal plan.

Sources: Sweet potatoes, mushrooms, cucumbers, bananas, eggs, potatoes, apricots, oranges, peas, avocados, coconut, spinach, and watermelon.

Folate - Good circulation holds a key role in the ear's health and function. Folate is a vitamin that helps increase circulation in the system. Proper circulation maintains the inner ear cells healthy, thus getting adequate folate can prevent hearing loss. Boost your folate intake by incorporating foods rich in folate.

Spinach, broccoli, peas, kidney beans, chickpeas, liver, fortified breakfast cereals, whole grains, melons, bananas, eggs, peanuts, and sunflower seeds are food sources abundant in folate.

Zinc - Zinc is a vital trace mineral that helps cell growth and triggers the immune system, thus helping to fend off ear infections. Apart from this, maintaining adequate zinc in the body has been associated with a reduced chance of developing tinnitus and presbycusis. Thus, to build a robust immune and keep infections at bay, add a rich array of foods packed with zinc into your diet.

Dark chocolate, oatmeal, yogurt, beans, lentils, peanuts, cashews, oysters, lobster, crab, dark meat chicken, mushrooms, spinach, garlic, and pumpkin seeds are food sources laden with zinc.

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https://www.netmeds.com/health-library/post/world-hearing-day-2023-significance-theme-and-5-must-to-add-nutrients-to-prevent-auditory-loss#:~:text=This%20year's%20theme%20is%20%E2%80%9CEar,health%20concerns%20faced%20in%20society

Obesity is on the rise globally and efforts to address it are challenging due to misconceptions about obesity and the role it plays in a person's health.

Help us harness the power of conversation and stories this World Obesity Day. Together we can correct misconceptions surrounding obesity, acknowledge its complexities, and take effective, collective action. Because when we all talk, debate and share, we can shift norms and transform health outcomes for everybody. This isn't going to be easy. But difficult conversations help us to influence and mobilise policy initiatives; to upend misconceptions; to turn words into action.

Let's talk about…

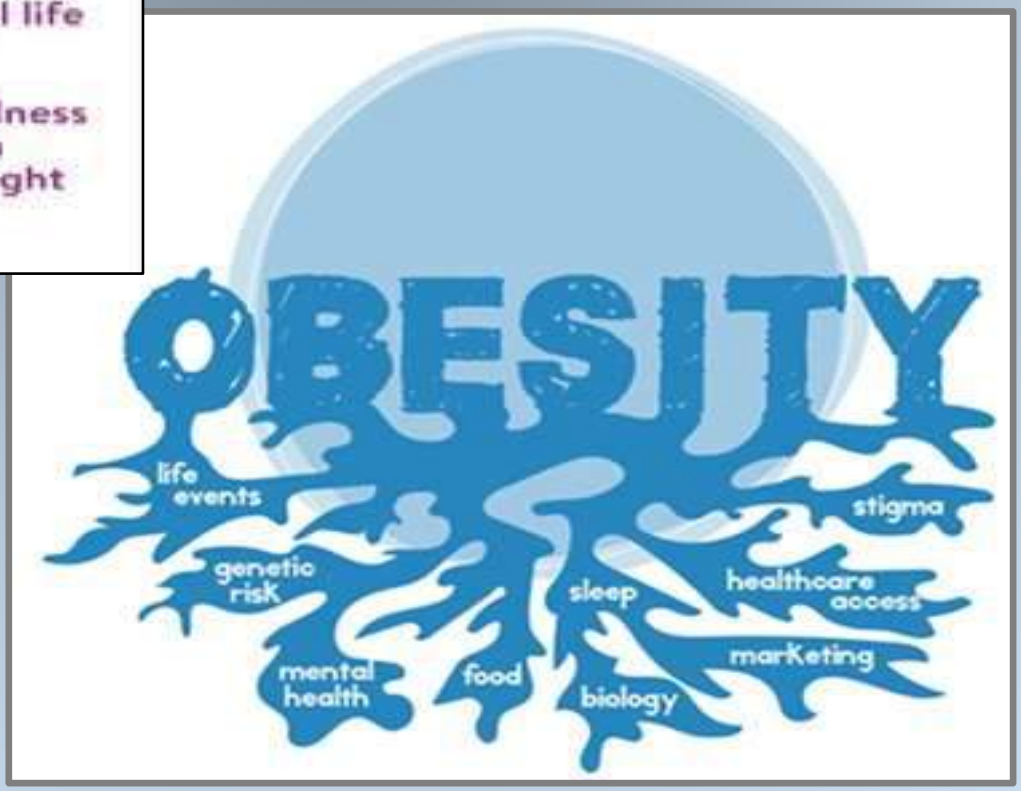
THE ROOTS OF OBESITY

Obesity can be many different things, and there is no single blueprint to addressing it. We all need to understand the complex roots of obesity, so we can take the action that works for our countries, our communities, and our own bodies.

Did you know our genes count for somewhere between 40-70% of our likelihood of developing obesity?

https://www.worldobesityday.org/

Our experiences, from prenatal life to early adulthood, pregnancy, illness and more can influence weight gain.



UPDATE ON CURRENT CATHCA PROJECTS

SUPPORTING HIV/TB CTR SERVICES

A two-and-a-half-year project funded by the Gauteng Department of Health for the period October 2021 to March 2024 is being rolled out to provide marginalized communities and vulnerable groups with much needed counselling, testing, and referral (CTR) services to mitigate HIV/AIDS, STIs, and TB (HAST) in the target areas.

- The project is designed to **raise awareness and mobilize** communities to access HAST services, followed by delivery of **HAST counselling-and-testing services** at mobile sites (non-medical sites) and **upstream referrals** to local health facilities of HAST patients and young men for **voluntary medical male circumcision** (VMMC).
- The catchment area of the project is Region E (Alexandra township and surrounding locations) of the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality with a focus on **high transmission areas** such as migrant hostels, brothels, taxi ranks, taverns, informal and low-income settlements.
- The project team prides itself on reaching out to communities and population groups who are liable to be left out of mainstream health care and in so doing plays a critical role in contributing to the **UNAIDS 95-95-95** “treatment for all” strategy as well as in the prevention of HIV transmissions and re-infections through the **U=U framework.**

TACKLING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE & FEMICIDE

A three-year pilot project co-funded by the Irish NGO **Misean Cara** was implemented to tackle **gender-based violence and femicide** (GBVF) in underprivileged locations in the provinces of Free State and Gauteng.

The implementation of the project relies on a partnership with the **Missionary Sisters of the Assumption** with support from five community-based partners: **Kopano Lerato**, **Holy Cross Home**, **Inkanyezi**, **Siyathokoza**, **Batho Ba Lerato**.

The project is grounded in a **three-pronged approach** that addresses both the demand and supply side factors, and supports an environment that enables vulnerable women to live free of abuse in their families and communities.

- **Demand Side**: Behaviour-Change and Self-Empowerment.

Empowering women and vulnerable people who face or are at risk of abuse to improve their knowledge, skills, attitudes, and help-seeking behaviours that prevent and respond to GBVF.

- **Supply Side**: Enhanced Support Services.

Strengthening coordination, cross-learning, and referral pathways among providers of services suited to the needs for safety, shelter, health, wellbeing, empowerment, and justice of GBVF victims and people at risk of abuse.

- **Enabling Environment**: System Strengthening and Change of Social Norms.

Advocating for an environment that enables communities to take a stand against harmful belief systems and social norms fuelling GBVF and promotes collaboration among state and non-state duty bearers in an effort to improve systems and processes against GBVF.

PARISH MENTAL HEALTH MINISTRY

A one-year pilot project funded by the **Association of Catholic Mental Health Ministers (ACMHM)** was implemented in the period January-December 2022 to **develop a Parish Mental Health Ministry (PMHM)** in the Catholic parishes of All Saints (Ennerdale) and Our Lady of Mercy (Emdeni) in the Archdiocese of Johannesburg—based on the Guidelines developed by the Catholic Institute for Mental Health Ministry of the University of San Diego.

Grounded in the practice of companionship (accompaniment), which is about creating confidential and non-judgmental relationships, the project contributed to:

- Increase **awareness of mental health** issues and **reduce stigma and discrimination** against those living with mental illness.

- Provide **spiritual/psychosocial accompaniment, support, and referrals** for people living with mental disorders and their family members.

- **Welcome people with mental illness** into the sacramental and communal life of the Church.

The project achievements were made possible by **training and mentoring the PMHM Teams** (members of the parish clergy, pastoral council, sodalities, and parishioners) in areas of mental health self-care and spiritual/psychosocial support with the assistance of **community collaborators and stakeholders**.

The Parish Mental Health Ministry **will be extended to four parishes of the Diocese of Klerksdorp (PMHM)** during the course of 2023.

RAISING MENTAL HEALTH AWARENSS

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On Saturday 18 Feb 2023 CATHCA partnered with RADIO VERITAS in a mental health awareness Campaign. The event took place at St Benedict's Catholic school's sport ground in Bedfordview where over 100 people were in attendance.

Fr Solly Mpela OFM opened the preceding with blessings and words of encouragement. The two parishes that implemented Parish Mental Health Ministry (All Saints & Our Lady of Mercy) shared their experiences which was very unique and encouraging to others. At the event CATHCA member organization (AFRA 2 community development) also offered free wellness checks.

CATHCA

Dear CATHCA Members,

Please remember to send us the story of your Organization!

- **What you are doing**
- **Tell us about your successes**
- **Share your challenges**

We will feature your organization her

(please send it to jane.sutherland@cathca.org)

EMPOWERING THE CATHOLIC HEALTH NETWORK

A three-year project funded by **Misereor** for the period 2021-2023 is being rolled out to **empower the Catholic Health Network** of 204 community-based organizations in South Africa, Botswana and Eswatini.

The Members of the Catholic Health Network have so far been empowered on three complementary levels:

- Improved **technical and management capacities** of 482 community health workers and administrators to provide health services to vulnerable people.
- Effective implementation of 95 **community-based health initiatives** in collaboration with concerned government and civil society stakeholders.
- Fruitful participation in 40 stakeholder engagement forums aimed at promoting **advocacy for health system strengthening** locally.

The project revolves around conducting capacity-building workshops on key community health and organizational issues, along with ad-hoc mentoring, guidance, and support.

It also entails organising conferences to enable networking and cross-learning opportunities, together with sharing resources via an established knowledge management system.

The **Annual General Meeting** (AGM) of the Catholic Health Care Association is an opportunity for the members of the Catholic Health Network to reflect on the past year and discuss priorities and opportunities going forward.

Social Media

Facebook: Our Facebook page is now at 2,690 Likes! It has been reviewed several times and we now have a 5-star rating.

Twitter: Our Twitter handle @cathhealthsa is also trending and most of the information that we tweet is also being retweeted by other organisations - we are gradually getting more followers.

Website: Our website is up and running and our new address is www.cathca.org

WhatsApp: Information is always shared on WhatsApp with Members, who like to network amongst themselves on this platform.

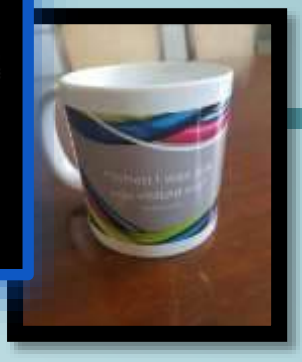
Web: www.cathca.org @CathHealthSA @CatholicHealthCareAssociation

Don't forget to check out our **Website, Instagram, Facebook** page and **Twitter** for updates, news, Member articles, interesting reads and contact details.

Help us to help you spread the wonderful work that you do by sending us articles, photos and information from your projects to jane.sutherland@cathca.org - we will put them on our Website, Facebook page and Twitter.

Stock for Sale / Membership

Members can buy summer golf-shirts (blue or white), caps and hats, navy CATHCA jerseys for themselves or for the caregivers in their organisation, and now these lovely mugs. If you need further information on prices or to place orders, please contact our offices on the following email address info@cathca.org or you can phone us on +27 (011) 880-4022.



CATHCA MEMBERSHIP

Do you want to be part of the Catholic healthcare network in Southern Africa?

Please contact the office for more information on +27 (011) 880-4022 or jane.sutherland@cathca.org

Offices are at:	Postal Address:	Contact information :
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