

DHRS COMMUNIQUE

JANUARY - JUNE 2020



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & REHABILITATION SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

• Communication Sciences & Disorders •
• Disability Studies • Nursing & Midwifery •
• Occupational Therapy • Physiotherapy •



HOD: A/PROF LBOGANG RAMMA

Message from the HOD's Desk:

The COVID-19 pandemic has pushed us into a dystopian reality. Our world is changing at a breath taking rate and for some amongst us this is an anxiety provoking time; we long for the 'normal' that we are used to but at the same time we are now fully aware that 'normal' as we used to know it is no more. Arundhati Roy spoke of this pandemic as being 'portal moment.' The new buzzword nowadays is 'new normal'. One can't help but wonder what will be the 'new normal' for DHRS? As we begin to come to terms with our new reality, how will our department look like, both its people and its feel as a communal space post the COVID-19 pandemic?

As far as I am concerned, the 'new normal' is both an exciting and frightening concept. Exciting because I have discovered new ways of working that can be liberating.

Frightening because after over 100 days of lockdown, no one has an answer about when is this period of uncertain existence going to pass. We have seen first-hand the devastation that this pandemic has caused in our society; exploiting the huge socio-economic inequalities to create suffering that defies description. Our very own staff and students were (are) not spared from this suffering. I therefore hope that whatever will be our 'new normal', we will collectively strive towards ensuring that no one is left behind, especially our staff and students. I eagerly look forward to seeing all of you back on campus and navigating the 'new normal' together.

Ke a leboga,
Lebogang



DHRS
Department of Health and
Rehabilitation Sciences
FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

IMPACT OF COVID-19

On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Coronavirus, known as the COVID-19, a global pandemic. This virus is primarily transmitted from symptomatic people to others who are in close contact through respiratory droplets. On 19 March 2020, in line with the communication from the VC, DHRHS EXCO agreed and encouraged all staff to work remotely from home and follow the standard principles for working remotely, while ensuring that the operational needs of the department/university are met. On Monday 23 March 2020, President Cyril Ramaphosa declared a 'national lockdown' of the country as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic. This drastic measure was taken as an attempt to 'flatten the curve' to give the health system a chance to ready itself for this global pandemic. DHRHS staff has been working from home since the declaration of the national lockdown and for many of us this new way of working (i.e. working remotely) had its fair share of challenges. However, all staff members have continued to do all they can to keep the key functions of the department running and I am very grateful for that.

Like the rest of FHS, UCT and the broader South African society, our department has had its share of pain and loss as a result of this pandemic: We have had some of our staff members and students who unfortunately contracted this virus. Fortunately, majority of them recovered and are doing very well.

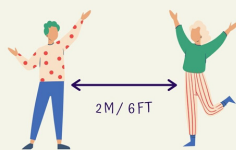
Sadly, due to COVID-19 we lost one of our students, Mrs Heidi Volkwijn, who was registered for the postgraduate diploma in Disability Studies. She passed away on Saturday 20 June 2020. Her husband, Barry passed away a few hours earlier, also due to COVID-19, on the same day. They leave behind their only daughter, Amy. Our heartfelt condolences to Amy and the rest of the family.

STOP THE SPREAD



WASH YOUR HANDS FREQUENTLY

Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water.



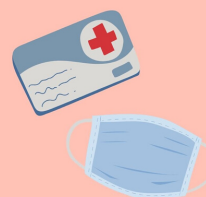
MAINTAIN PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Maintain at least 2 meters (6 feet) distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing.



AVOID TOUCHING EYES, NOSE AND MOUTH

Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth.



IF YOU HAVE A FEVER, COUGH AND DIFFICULTY BREATHING, SEEK MEDICAL CARE EARLY

Stay home if you feel unwell. If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and call in advance.

STAY UP TO DATE WITH COVID-19 NEWS:

<https://sacoronavirus.co.za/>

If you are experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms, please contact the hotline.

Emergency Hotline: 0800 029 999

WhatsApp Support Line: 0600-123456



DHRHS

#BLACKLIVESMATTER

On 12 June 2020 DHRIS EXCO organized a departmental 'imbizo' to collectively engage and reflect on the hotly contested topics at the time; the murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer and the protests that followed, allegations of racism and protests at our high schools and a debate that was raging at UCT at the time related to an published editorial by a UCT Professor, Nicoli Nattrass. It was a very constructive dialogue by DHRIS staff members, and evoked painful memories that some of the our staff members had endured while navigating our complex society. This 'imbizo' showed that there is an urgent need to have more of these reflective space opportunities to maintain a healthy dialogue in the department. We will certainly have more of these dialogues.

One staff member saying, "I can't breathe resonates with people because many of us lose our breath constantly, when we think about how challenging it is for people to improve their lives because of the inequalities historically that permeate still and its like things ended but didn't. The degree of frustration and anger never seems to abate. In terms of so many places in society, for us with children it's a personal matter because we are sending out our babies into this anger and frustration and potential lack of opportunity and I think about our students and their own families and what they are facing".



**I CAN'T
BREATHE**
BLACK LIVES MATTER

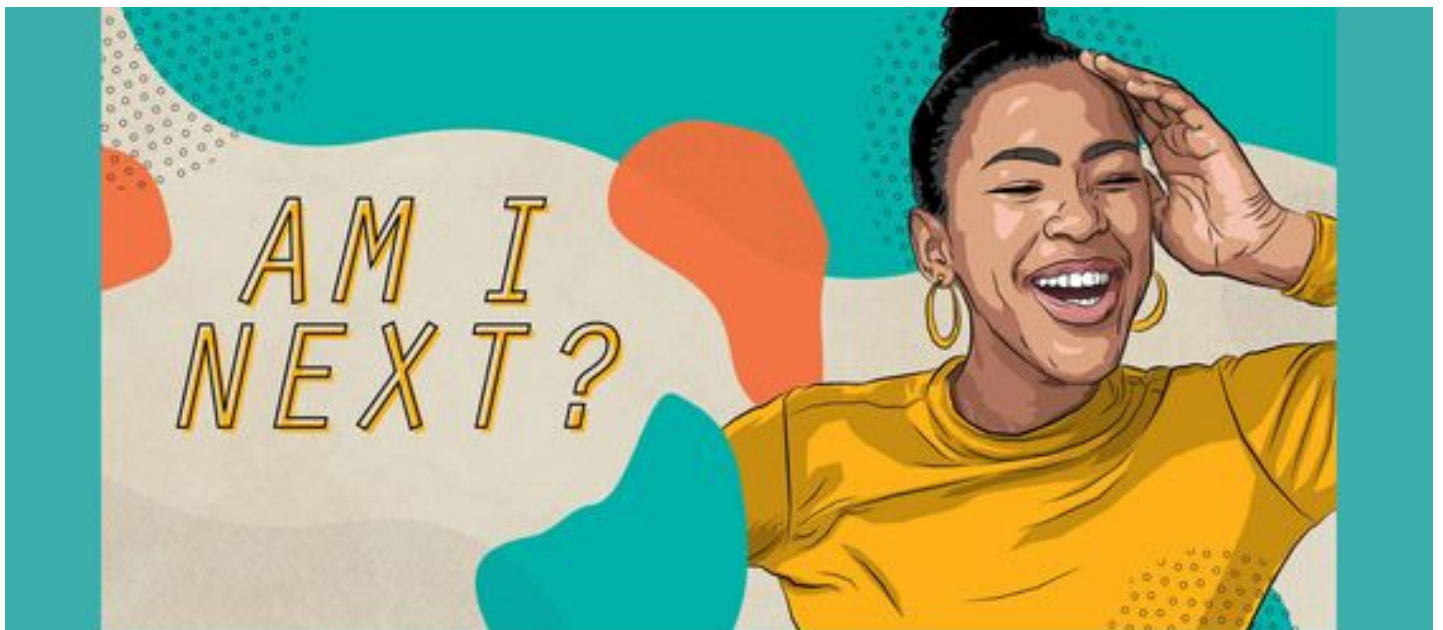


DHRIS

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

GBV is an ongoing issue in our society and impacts almost every aspect of our lives. As President Ramaphosa so aptly put it "...men have declared war on women in South Africa." To that extent, the HOD engaged all DHRS male colleagues and they resolved to invite all male students in DHRS and FHS and organize a DHRS men's dialogue on GBV.

This dialogue was planned and organized with the assistance of Dr Tania De Villiers and it was going to be facilitated by the organization Sonke Gender Justice on 30 March 2020. Unfortunately, this dialogue had to be postponed due to COVID-19 lockdown. Communication will be sent out soon for a new date.



DHRS RECOGNITION

- Congratulations to our very own fabulous Inclusive Practice Africa (IPA) team: Prof Harsha Kathard, Prof Roshan Galvaan and Prof Theresa Lorenzo for being awarded the 'Inclusive Education and ICT Award' at the prestigious Zero Project Conference in Vienna, Austria during February 2020. IPA is one of the new research entities in DHRS and as you can see they are starting the new decade with a bang!
- Congratulations to A/Prof Judy McKenzie and her team for securing an accreditation status of a new research unit: including disability induction in Africa (IDEA). This research unit has been accredited for the next three years and it is located here in DHRS. Please feel free to engage with Judy and her team to explore possible collaborations via this unit.
- Congratulations Tracey-Lee Cloete who has won a scholarship and will be spearheading an initiative with a University in Belgium to facilitate staff and student exchanges.

DHRS RECOGNITION

- Congratulations to Dr Matumo Ramafikeng (OT) and Nomusa Ntinga (Physio) for being awarded the FHS Start UP Emerging Research Award (SERA) this year.
- International Nurses Day was celebrated globally in the month of May and DHRS acknowledge the sterling work done by our Nursing and Midwifery Division and Nurses world-wide.
- Zarina Syed was invited by the Deanery as a panelist at the Dean's dialogue on Substance Use Disorder Management entitled. "About Addiction, moving towards context driven change". Her topic was about "Community support approaches in relation to the dialogue about intergenerational trauma and the current COVID-19 pandemic". - Well done Zerina for representing DHRS.

STAFF

- **HoDivs 2020:**
 - A/Prof Helen Buchanan - Head of Division for OT (replacing Dr Amshuda Sunday).
 - Dr Michal Harty - Head of Division for CSD (replacing A/Prof Michelle Pascoe).
 - Sumaya Gabriels - Interim Head of Division for DS. (A/Prof Judy McKenzie stepped down)
 - Dr Niri Naidoo - Head of Division for Physiotherapy
 - Dr Nicki Fouche - Head of Division for Nursing and Midwifery
- **Heads for Portfolio Committees 2020:**
 - Dr Matumo Ramafikeng - new chair of DUEC. (A/Prof Soraya Maart stepped down).
 - Dr Pam Gretschel - new chair of Postgrad
 - Dr Gillian Ferguson - chair of Research
 - Lucretia Petersen - chair of Transformation
 - Hanske Flieringa - new chair of Wellness
- **DHRS Representatives at Faculty and University:**
 - Iesrafeel Abbas - Interim representative at the Faculty Health & Safety Committee.
 - Shamila Manie - Academic member to serve on University Senate.
 - Gillian Ferguson - Chair of the Faculty Admissions Committee
 - Matumo Ramafikeng - Member of the Curriculum Review Task team that aims to implement key features of the Curriculum Change Framework for undergraduate programmes across the Faculty.



STAFF

- Ntsikelelo Pefile, joined the Physio team as lecturer and started in January 2020.
- Vera Hlayisi and Olebeng Mahura took up permanent positions in CSD since January 2020.
- Vera has submitted her PhD proposal to Ethics.
- Zarina Syed took up a permanent position as OT clinical educator since June 2020.
- Itumeleng Likheole has been appointed as Receptionist on a one year contract.
- Monique September is the new physiotherapy administrator on a temporary basis.

OTHER NEWS

- GSH has bought a fabulous vestibular rehab and fall risk evaluation piece of equipment - can't wait to get a wonderful high-tech rehab service going. Great for student training and will be of interest to physio and OT as well.
- South African sign language has been recognised as the 12th official language by the Parliamentary Constitution and Review Committee.
- CSD is looking forward to welcoming Dunay Schmulian (we knew her as Taljaard) back to train students and staff in counselling, debriefing, parental grief and other exciting topics.
- Clinical CE team have ensured the year started well with clinics and well-organised workshops.
- Our 4th year student Tersia Davids was awarded academic excellence from the Alliance of South African Independent Professional Association.
- Audiology student Nikki Tromp completed her MSc in one year. She has also been awarded and recently started on a PhD Scholarship in the Netherlands.
- Nuha Khatib submitted her MSc and her research is pioneering in the area of tele-rehabilitation with public health patients.
- MSc student, Romy Cohen will be graduating with distinction.
- Our final year (4th year) H&R students returned to campus and have successfully completed their mandatory 14-day quarantine. Some programmes have already started their clinical activities, albeit on a limited basis."



FAREWELLS

We said farewell to the following staff members and wish them well in their future endeavours:

- Debra Adams resigned as the Admin Line Manager. Prof Ramma has taken the responsibility of acting LM until the appointment of the new LM, which is in process.
- Anthea Hansen resigned to focus on her PhD developments. DSD is sad to have lost such a valuable staff member who has made a big impact in the division and department.



WISHING YOU ALL THE BEST AT YOUR SUPER EXCITING NEW JOB.
IT WAS INDEED A GREAT BLESSING TO WORK WITH YOU.



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STAY SAFE. SAVE LIVES.



DHRS