

## EASTERN CAPE TO HOST SOME OF THE GREAT MINDS IN MEDICINE

BHISHO – The Eastern Cape Health Department has partnered with the Public Health Association of South Africa (PHASA) to host public sector thought leaders at this year's annual PHASA conference. The event takes place at the Boardwalk iCC from September 10th to 13th.

PHASA aims to engaging public health practitioners and researchers from across the country and the world at large, These great minds will share their experiences and research, discuss topical public health issues, and also to mentor public health students and up and coming researchers.

This much anticipated conference is set to create a platform for engagement with public health experts, academics, researchers, students, non-governmental organisations and civil society members.

The Department of Health strives to transform the public healthcare system with the National Health Insurance and other initiatives.

Our focus is to connect with society and influence how everyone thinks about and approaches public health research, policy, and practice. Ultimately, the intention is improve health outcomes for all.

This as public health practitioners, programmes, and systems work to create more effective and sustainable solutions to public health challenges, based on the best available evidence and focusing on equity, social justice, and community engagement.

Recent experiences, emerging diseases like Covid-19, health interventions, academic transformation systems and imperatives like NHI - all highlighted the need for a fundamental shift in how research is generated and translated into public health policies and practice.

There is a clarion call for new and innovative approaches to bridge the gap between research and action.

Partnerships between researchers, policymakers and communities are central to such endeavours.

MEC for Health, Nomakhosazana Meth, said the conference provides an opportune setting for engaging with the most recent public health research and evidence.

“It will provoke a rethinking of current models of research translation, allowing us to identify barriers and leverage opportunities for change.

“The conference will stimulate the exploration of new strategies for knowledge exchange and dissemination,” she said.

Dr Rolene Wagner, Superintendent-General of the Eastern Cape Department of Health, said the department through its Strategy and Organisational Planning and Human Resource Development Chief Directorates had committed to partner with PHASA.

“The objective is to create an opportunity to share our best practices and achievements and to engage and learn about new knowledge and its translation into practice,” said Wagner.

The conference is expected to draw participants like public health experts, government officials, academics, researchers and post-grad students.

It will provide an opportunity for all these relevant stakeholders to interact in a platform where they can share knowledge and exchange ideas on the best practices.

It will also create a platform for robust deliberations on departmental imperatives and performance indicators, influencing health outcomes with subsequent action plans to be implemented.

Issued by the Eastern Cape Department of Health.

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