

Business for South Africa Health Workgroup Media Release

Update on critical PPE secured for frontline health care workers

8 April 2020

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Together the Motsepe Foundation and associated companies, Business for South Africa and the Solidarity Fund have secured critical stock of 200 000 three ply masks, 100 000 KN95 masks and sterile gloves and surgical masks for use by frontline doctors, nurses and health care workers.

This stock is immediately available in South Africa, and will be prioritised for use in the public healthcare sector across the country.

This forms part of Government and the Business sector's key objective to ensure there is a consistent, forward-looking supply of critical personal protective equipment (PPE) in South Africa to protect healthcare workers who are working tirelessly to ensure the public remains safe during this unprecedented global healthcare crisis.

The Minister of Health, Dr Zweli Mkhize, was joined by the Deputy Minister of Health Dr Joe Phaahla and the MEC of Health in Gauteng Dr Bandile Masuku at the Motsepe Foundation to ceremoniously receive the consignment that will be handed over to the Department of Health. "Ultimately, this is about our valued health care workers. Business and Government have come together because we all share the concerns of Unions and our workers that health workers must be protected as they fight Coronavirus at the frontlines. No health care workers will be fielded without PPE's and adequate training because we need our workers healthy and protected," he said.

Dr Patrice Motsepe, Chairman of the Motsepe Foundation, said "We are most grateful to the health workers for their sacrifices and commitment to provide treatment and to help patients and other South Africans to overcome the coronavirus pandemic. We would also like to thank the President and the Ministers of Health and Trade, Industry and Competition, for their outstanding leadership during these challenging times. South Africans, including business and labour, have come together in the true spirit of Ubuntu, compassion and selflessness. The Motsepe family and companies that we are associated with, will continue to do everything possible to assist health workers, poor rural and urban communities and all South Africans to prevail over the current coronavirus pandemic."

Business for South Africa's Health Workgroup's key priority is to support Government and the country's healthcare workers by ensuring there is a consistent supply of critical protective equipment necessary to keep them safe during the pandemic. This includes global sourcing of PPE,

of which significant orders have already been placed and which have already begun landing in South Africa; accelerating local production of critical equipment; and issuing an ongoing call to all companies and industries across South Africa who have access to PPE stocks, to urgently donate or divert them in the national interest. Companies that have stocks are asked to email: covid19supplies@businessresponsecovid19.co.za

Mr Stavros Nicolaou, who leads the Business for South Africa's Health Workgroup, comments: "One of our most critical objectives in turning the tide against the pandemic is to ensure the full availability and productivity of our health workforce. This week is International Health Workers' Week. On behalf of every person in South Africa, we would like to thank all our doctors, nurses and community healthcare workers for their unconditional commitment to ensuring South Africans remain safe. Their devotion to their work and to South Africa is deeply appreciated."

The occasion poignantly fell on World Health Day which focuses on the role of Nurses and Midwives in the health care sector. As the World Health Organisation releases the first World State of Nursing Report, major efforts worldwide are being undertaken to secure the safety of health care workers globally. South Africa, like all countries, grapples to protect its own workforce in an increasingly volatile environment- the Minister elaborated on these dynamics: "...such strategic relationships with business and our favorable relations with key countries like China and India, who are the biggest manufacturers of PPE's, are what enable us to secure stock in an increasingly competitive environment. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Motsepe Family, Stavros Nicolaou and the entire business and donor community for these timely and gracious interventions."

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