

# The Golden Mortar



Bulletin of the Southern Gauteng Branch of the Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa  
and Associated Sectors

## BULLETIN 3, SEPTEMBER 2020



### Routine Immunisation During a Pandemic

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The COVID-19 pandemic has brought a lot of uncertainty to healthcare professionals. Some of the uncertainties pertain to routine vaccination, whether they should continue, and how to provide this essential service in a safe environment.

#### What happens when we stop vaccinating?

The answer is simple- vaccine-preventable diseases (VPDs) will reappear. Disruption, even briefly, of routine vaccinations increases the risk of highly contagious VPDs, such as measles and pertussis. Vulnerable groups, such as infants, the elderly and immunocompromised persons bear the greatest burden of these diseases and it places an extra strain on a healthcare system that is already challenged by COVID-19.

A high vaccine coverage (percentage of persons vaccinated) is needed in order to prevent an outbreak of a VPD. Measles, for example, requires a 95% vaccination coverage to prevent outbreaks. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) assesses vaccine coverage by measuring the number of children within and across countries that have completed three doses of vaccine against diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (DTP). The first four months of 2020 saw a significant decrease in children completing these three doses, which is indicative of decreased coverage and increased risk of an outbreak of VPDs. It is estimated that over 117 million children in 37 countries may miss out on receiving measles vaccine due to COVID-19.

Healthcare professionals need to reassure parents that it is not too late to catch-up vaccines for a child that may have missed immunisations during the hard lockdown period in South Africa. We are in an ideal position to advise on the safety of vaccines, stress the importance of immunisation, address concerns and dispel myths that circulate continuously.

While the routine immunisation of infants, children and high-risk groups should be prioritised, it is necessary for clinics and healthcare personnel who provide these services to adapt the delivery of these services in order to safeguard themselves and the community against COVID-19.

#### How should vaccination services be adapted to ensure a safe environment?

Countries around the world have published guidelines on how to adapt their clinics to safely provide routine vaccination services. In South Africa, the National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD) has published guidelines on the above and may be accessed via the following link: <https://www.nicd.ac.za/diseases-a-z-index/covid-19/covid-19-guidelines/guidelines-for-routine-immunisation-services/>

The guidelines encourage routine vaccination of babies and children as per the current immunisation schedule, including the age-appropriate catch-up of children if applicable. Measures, such as social distancing, the wearing of cloth masks and hand hygiene are emphasised, and contact may be further minimised by having all the necessary paperwork filled out before the visit.

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Healthcare workers who see sick children in their practice, should ensure that measures are adopted to separate these visits from well children needing routine immunisations. These measures may include:

- Scheduling different times of the day for routine vaccinations and for sick children visits
- Having patients wait in cars, or outside, until called in for their appointment to prevent overcrowded waiting areas

### Should children with COVID-19 or suspected COVID-19 be vaccinated?

Mild illness is not a contraindication to vaccination. However, if a child has COVID-19 or is suspected of having COVID-19, with or without symptoms, the idea is for them to go into isolation to prevent the spread of the disease to healthcare personnel and other patients. Vaccination should therefore be deferred for these children until they meet the criteria for discontinuing isolation.

If a child is inadvertently vaccinated while incubating the disease, or while having asymptomatic infection, there is no evidence to suggest that vaccination will affect the course of the disease. The infection is not believed likely to affect the safety or efficacy of the vaccination either.

### Conclusion

Vaccination is an essential service, and the importance of maintaining high vaccination coverage to prevent the transmission of VPDs needs to be effectively conveyed to the public. A child needs to have received all the necessary immunisation doses in order to be considered “fully vaccinated.” In most cases, missing a vaccine does not mean that it is too late to vaccinate. The healthcare professional can develop a tailor-made catch-up plan to ensure the child receives all the necessary vaccines and doses. Vaccination protects the individual, and most importantly, protects the community.

REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

## Why COVID - 19 is Spreading Fast?

### 3 Major Reasons



They are my colleagues  
So I can speak without Mask



They are my close friends  
So I can speak without Mask



They are my relations  
So I can speak without Mask

### Don't Do Above 3 Mistakes

### Wear your mask properly always

### Save yourself & Society





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# PSSA CPDs



Visit the PSSA WEBSITE or see the PSSA NEWSLETTER to find CPD WEBINARS which pharmacists can use as CPD activities for submission to the SA Pharmacy Council.

Register to listen to the WEBINAR recordings and to be able to communicate with the Webinar Organiser.

## Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa PSSA Newsletter #39/2020 – 09 September 2020

### The PSSA – pharmacy in action!

#### Legislation Webinar Series – Episode 1 to 4

The PSSA National Office will host a Legislation webinar series over the next 12 weeks, addressing several legislative topics. Registration is now open for the first four episodes.

#### Episode 1: An introduction to the interpretation of South African legislation (Wednesday 16 September 2020 19:00 )

Interpretation of legislation is not for the faint-hearted and here to stay as technology unfolds. The ability to read and interpret statutes and legal documents is an essential management skill and not simple. It is not a mechanical sequence of join-the-dots or painting-by-numbers. Join us to find out more.

After the webinar, attendees will be able to:

1. Appreciate the complexities of interpreting an Act of Parliament or statute;
2. Quickly identify the statutory structure;
3. Identify what is the law and its interrelationships;
4. Distinguish what is not legislation; and
5. Understand and interpret subordinate legislation in context.

Presenter: René Doms RPh FPS, Dip Pharm (SAPC) Adv Dip (B&A) (US) Bluris (UNISA) LLB (UFS), Health Products Regulatory Consultant

[Register here](#)

#### Episode 2: Scope of practice of pharmacy support personnel (Tuesday 22 September 2020 19:00)

Over the years, as knowledge and technology improved and increased, pharmacists in every practice setting have realised that well trained and supervised pharmacy support personnel can free them from many of the manipulative functions required. This webinar explores the scopes of practice of the different categories of pharmacy support personnel.

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After the webinar, attendees will be able to:

1. Understand the contribution to practice that can be made by each category of pharmacy support personnel
2. Recognise the need for varying levels of the pharmacist's supervision of pharmacy support personnel
3. Be aware of the functions that can appropriately and legally be delegated to pharmacy support personnel

Presenter: Lorraine Osman, Editor: SAPJ & SAPA

[Register here](#)

**Episode 3: Scope of practice and duties of pharmacists, interns and responsible pharmacists (Thursday 1 October 2020 19:00)**

The scope of practice of a pharmacist may sound easy and straight forward but sometimes important factors such as type of pharmacy, supervision of pharmacy support personnel and conditions under which pharmacy shall be conducted are left behind. Adding to the scope of practice of the pharmacist is the authority, duty, and responsibilities of the responsible pharmacist. This webinar will also include the services for which a pharmacist may levy a fee, supplementary training and specialities.

After the webinar, attendees will be able to:

1. Differentiate between the scope of practice of a pharmacist, community service pharmacist and pharmacist intern;
2. Differentiate between the different categories of pharmacies and the conditions under which each shall be conducted;
3. Understand the authority, duty and responsibility of a responsible pharmacist; and
4. Have overview knowledge of supplementary training and specialisations of pharmacists.

Presenter: Mariet Eksteen, PSSA Professional Development and Support

[Register here](#)

**Episode 4: Labour Pains: Medicine for Labour Laws – Some key issues in the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (Tuesday 6 October 2020 19:00)**

Lockdown has deprived organisations of money forcing them to re-examine how they operate to survive. Employee flexibility and cost is critical. You can ask questions and get written advice from an expert.

After the webinar, attendees will understand:

1. the lawful options for using employees optimally and at lowest cost;
2. the difference between independent contractors and employees, permanent and temporary, full-time and part-time;
3. issues around overtime and changing conditions of employment; and
4. maternity, parental and family responsibility leave.

Presenter: Gerald Jacobs, BA.LLB (UCT) IRDP (distinction) (US), Attorney

[Register here](#)

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