

NEWS RELEASE



Media Release

Johannesburg, 10th July 2020

The Solidarity Fund approves R405m to purchase critical medical equipment for Covid-19 hotspots

10 July 2020: As the Covid-19 pandemic intensifies across South Africa and the country braces for an expected surge in hospital admissions, the Solidarity Fund has responded by approving an additional R405m towards the purchase of critical healthcare equipment for the public hospital system in the hotspots of Gauteng, Western Cape and the Eastern Cape.

Working in close collaboration with the National Department of Health (NDoH) as well as senior officials at provincial level, the Solidarity Fund has approved funding for a comprehensive list of essential equipment, including additional hospital beds, ventilators and high- flow oxygen devices.

The national health response is being phased and coordinated across the provinces, in line with projected demand for health services. These are based on the epidemiological modelling of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in each of these provinces. The strategy involves the activation of additional hospital beds at various acuity levels, as well as the provision of field hospital capacity, through both reallocation and procurement of resources.

The predicted demand is for over 100,000 general ward beds and over 26,000 critical care beds at the peak of the pandemic in the country.

For Gauteng, the Solidarity Fund has approved R209m for the purchase of critical medical equipment. Given the projected peak of the pandemic and the high population density in the province, the funds will be used to purchase high care equipment in existing hospitals and to equip the field hospital at NASREC.

To assist hospitals in the Western Cape to better meet demand caused by the pandemic, R120m has been approved for further hospital beds as well as ICU ventilators across the province.

The Fund has also approved R76m for the Eastern Cape where there is insufficient general ward and ICU capacity and an urgent need for oxygen devices in particular. The funds will be used to purchase essential equipment, such as high flow oxygen devices which are more cost effective than invasive ventilators. They have been used successfully in the province so far.

In addition, the Fund has approved R250m towards the local production of 20 000 non-invasive ventilators in support of the National Ventilator Project. The locally-manufactured ventilators are expected to be delivered at the end of August in line with the predicted infection peak.

Since it was established in March 2020, The Fund has approved more than R2,097bn to fund initiatives to prevent, support, detect and care for those affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. So far, the Fund has approved R1,929bn towards health interventions, R137m towards humanitarian relief efforts and R31m towards education and awareness programmes.

As at 09 July 2020, the Fund has received R3,02 billion in pledges, with more than R2,7bn already deposited. More than 300 000 donors have contributed to the Fund so far, with 2 067 of these being corporates and trusts and 298 528 are individuals who have either donated directly or through fundraising platforms.

Interim CEO of The Solidarity Fund, Nomkhita Nqweni said: "We are facing perhaps one of the most critical phases since the outbreak of Covid-19 and The Solidarity Fund's contribution to the national health response will help save lives and better equip public hospitals in hotspots to cope with the increased demand as the pandemic heads towards its peak. We thank each and every one of our donors for their support that makes it possible for us to ensure that critical medical equipment gets to those who need it most."

The Solidarity Fund is committed to transparency around all of its activities. Find detailed information and reporting around donations received, projects and approvals as well as the impact the Fund is having by visiting www.solidarityfund.co.za.

ENDS//

FOR MEDIA QUERIES, PLEASE CONTACT:

Viwe Tlaleane

Viwe.tlaleane@solidarityfund.co.za

Media@solidarityfund.co.za

066 301 6520