



MEDIA RELEASE

SOLIDARITY FUND DELIVERS FIRST BATCH OF VENTILATORS TO HOSPITALS

Johannesburg, 24 August 2020 - In early July 2020, the Solidarity Fund approved the additional funding of R405m to go towards the purchase of critical healthcare equipment for the public hospital system in the hotspots of Gauteng, Western Cape and the Eastern Cape. This was in response to the expected surge in hospital admissions caused by Covid-19 that was predicted to peak in late August. A further R250m was approved for the local production of up to 20 000 non-invasive C-PAP ventilators in support of the National Ventilator Project.

Earmarked to be delivered by the end of August, the first batch of ventilators have been handed over ahead of schedule.

Locally and globally, medical institutions have struggled to find and supply the necessary equipment to treat Covid-19 patients, and ventilators have been high on their list of critical equipment. To meet the inevitable demand for this life-saving equipment, and in anticipation of a global shortage, our National Government set up the National Ventilation Project with the aim of rapidly facilitating local development and manufacturing of thousands of non-invasive ventilators. The Solidarity Fund has worked closely with the Project and the National Government to ensure that South Africa doesn't face the same shortages as other countries have while treating Covid-19.

Interim CEO of The Solidarity Fund, Nomkhita Nqweni said: "As we traverse the predicted peak of the Covid-19 infection in South Africa, it is important that we accelerate our efforts to arm the medical practitioners with the equipment that they need. We are gratified that the first instalment of ventilators is being distributed ahead of schedule, and are committed to ensuring the speedy dispatch of all ventilators to medical facilities on the frontline of the fight against this pandemic. We thank every single one of our generous and committed donors for making this possible."

Non-invasive ventilators form an essential component in the management of Covid-19 for patients with mild-to-moderate respiratory failure, and free up intubation ventilators for the more critical patients. Dr Oliver Smith, who will be receiving 35 of the first batch of the close to 1000 ventilators in the process of delivery on behalf of Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital, says the introduction of these machines will play a major role in treating and managing the disease. "Invasive

intubation, while effective, is not always necessary. Intubating a patient when they may not need it, denies another patient potentially life-saving treatment in resource-limited settings. These non-invasive ventilators will go a long way in relieving the pressure on stretched resources, while giving patients the necessary care for their recovery.” Charlotte Maxeke is one of approximately 60 medical facilities across the country that have received ventilators in this first batch.

Since it was established in March 2020, The Fund has undertaken initiatives based on 4 key pillars – to Prevent, Protect, Care and Support those affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic. Through the support of over 300 000 donors – individuals and enterprises – the Fund has received R3,131bn in pledges, with R3,062bn already deposited. It has also approved R2,260bn towards the initiatives of Health Response, Humanitarian Support to communities and Behaviour Change related to Covid-19.

To find out detailed information and reporting around donations received, projects and approvals, as well as the impact the Fund is having, visit www.solidarityfund.co.za.

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