

Vrystaat baanbreker met neonatale nooddiensopleiding

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Die Vrystaat kan spog met die heel eerste werkswinkel ter wêreld wat die "Kangaroo Mother Care" (KMC)-beginsel tydens ambulansvervoer aan nooddienswerkers leer. Die KMC-metode fokus op direkte vel-op-vel aanraking tussen moeders en hul premature babas, en is noodsaaklik om dit toe te pas wanneer 'n vroegegebore baba vervoer word. Die neonatale verpleegspesialis wat deur die Nasionale Gesondheidsdepartement in die Vrystaat aangestel is, Vanessa Booyens, sê sy kan nie genoeg klem plaas op die natuurlike helling wat direkte aanraking en borsvoeding aan babas bied nie. "Om 'n kind van sy ma af weg te neem na geboorte, is die mees onmenslike ding denkbaar wat 'n mens kan doen. Al het 'n baba dringende mediese behandeling nodig weens sy premature aard, is dit werklik die beste opsie om die kind so na as moontlik aan die moeder te hou." Sy sê die moeder se liggaam is só aangepas dat dit temperatuurregulering, emosionele ondersteuning en sekuriteit aan die baba

bied – al die dinge wat nodig is om spoedige groei en herstel te verseker. Die Nasionale Gesondheidsdepartement het reeds beveel dat die KMC-beginsel in alle staats hospitale landswyd aangewend word. "’n Broeikas is soos ’n doodskis vir jou kind. Dit kan nóóit vir enige baba goed wees om weg van sy ma af te wees nie. Medies én natuurlik gesproke is dit werklik die beste oplossing." Hierdie grensverskuivende werkswinkel wat gister eksklusief vir Vrystaatse nooddienswerkers in Bloemfontein se Universitas Akademiese Hospitaal aangebied is, beklemtoon spesifiek die belangrikheid van moeder-tot-kind aanraking terwyl hulle in ’n ambulans vervoer word. "Van alle moeders wat babas kry in die Vrystaat, skenk slegs 40% van hulle in hospitale geboorte. Die res word met hul babas – dikwels premature babas – per ambulans na hospitale vervoer. Daardie baba wat drasties ondergewig is, kan nie onderhewig wees aan die geskud van ’n voertuig wat vinnig ry nie. Dit kan die kind erge skade aandoen, of selfs tot die dood lei."

Dit is een van die faktore wat bydra tot die Vrystaat se reputasie as die provinsie wat die hoogste babasterftesifer in die land het, sê Booyens. "Ons het ook maar net 18 toegewyde neonatale inter-fasiliteit ambulans in die provinsie, teenoor die 98 gewone ambulans. Die nooddienswerkers is dikwels die eerste mediese personeel waarmee die ma en haar baba in aanraking kom. Hulle moet weet hoe om die kind reg te vervoer." Daarom, meen Booyens, is KMC-behandeling veral in ambulans van kardinale belang. Wat ook op die provinsiale gesondheidsdepartement se agenda is, is om "koshuise" naby aan hospitale in al vyf die distrikte in die Vrystaat op te rig. Moeders wat ver van hospitale woon en naby hul geboortedatum is, sal dan in hierdie fasiliteite oorbly, sodat hulle by die hospitaal is wanneer hulle in kraam gaan. "Dit is net een van die talle dinge wat ons beplan om te sorg dat alle babas 'n groter kans op lewe het," meen Booyens. Sy gebruik die Manapo-hospitaal in Qwa-Qwa as 'n voorbeeld waar groot sukses reeds deur ingryping van die departement behaal

is: "Ons het 'n 65% daling in sterftes onder babas in die afgelope paar maande in daardie hospitaal gehad. In Desember 2011 was daar 13 sterftes, en in Januarie 2012 slegs een."



Neonatale verpleegspesialis, Vanessa Booyens, verduidelik hoe om suurstof aan 'n premature baba toe te dien. FOTO: LANI FOUCHÉ

Free State to join in Freedom Day celebrations

MARINÉ JACOBS

The coming Friday marks Freedom Day, a national public holiday that commemorates the first democratic elections held on 27 April 1994. Throughout the country, various events are held to remember those who suffered under the Apartheid regime, celebrate the struggle icons and honour those who are committed to the transformation to a new South Africa and build a better life for all.

The Free State will take part in the celebrations for the 18th Freedom Day under the national theme "Working Together to Promote Unity in Diversity". According to the provincial Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation, the staging of the ANC Centenary Celebrations in Mangaung earlier this year, was indicative of "the rich history and heritage that this Province has as the Heart of Freedom, amongst other things." The Freedom Day celebrations will start at 09h00 on Friday at the Bohlokong Stadium in Bethlehem. The programme includes exhibitions by various stakeholders, cultural performances, sport and recreation activities and messages from political principals. For

more information you can contact Tankiso Zola at 051 410 4742 or tankiso@sacr.fs.gov.za.

Many of us will never forget the day when former president Nelson Mandela cast his vote in our country's first ever democratic election. It marked the culmination of years of oppression by a white government. During the struggle for freedom, many died in their fight for equality. The Soweto uprising of 1976 saw hundreds of people joining the resistance struggle to challenge the unjust Apartheid laws. Many sacrifices were made to bring South Africa to the day of 27 April 1994, and now we continue to annually celebrate our freedom.

According to a statement on the website for South African Government Information (www.info.gov.za), "Freedom Day provides a milestone for all South Africans to collectively participate in the commemoration of the pain and struggle to build a non-racial, democratic and free South Africa in which we all have the freedom to prosper. It creates awareness that freedom and human rights are for all human beings, regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or

other status. This day reaffirms our freedom and ensures that the violation of such rights never occurs again."



Former president Nelson Mandela casts his vote during the first South African democratic elections held on 27 April 1994

Fight flu this winter

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Seasonal influenza, more commonly referred to as "the flu," is a viral infection caused by the influenza virus. Flu is more common in the winter months in temperate regions and easily spreads from person to person via saliva droplets from coughing or sneezing. You can also contract flu if you touch an infected surface and afterwards touch your mouth, eyes or nose.

What are the symptoms?

Influenza symptoms usually appear as an abrupt onset of high fever, coughing, body aches, headaches, runny nose, sore throat, or any combination of these. Symptoms typically show up two days after exposure to the virus. However, an individual with the influenza virus becomes contagious one day before the onset of symptoms and continues to be contagious for up to five days after symptoms appear.

Treatment available

Treatment of influenza usually involves over the counter medications for symptomatic relief and/or

prescription anti-viral specifically designed to fight against the flu. While treatments are available, most people actually recover from the influenza virus naturally within a week without any medical intervention at all. However, complications from the flu can occur and, in severe cases such as pneumonia, may require hospitalization.

Avoid getting the flu

Due to the contagious nature of the virus, influenza epidemics occur every year globally, often spreading quickly through schools, homes, and workplaces. It is therefore important that you take preventive steps to control the spread of the flu.

Some preventive measures include:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick to help prevent others from catching your illness.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Wash your hands with soap and

water, and use hand sanitizer (especially children).

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Practice good health. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage stress well, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

While preventive measures are important, it has been scientifically demonstrated that the single best way to protect yourself and others against influenza is to get a flu vaccination every year. Flu shots are recommended for anyone over six months and especially those at higher risk of infection that include the elderly, healthcare workers, caregivers of those at high risk, and close contacts of children younger than 6 months. Vaccinations are safe for breastfeeding women.

* NEWS YOU CAN USE

It is important to note that children and teenagers should not take aspirin or cold remedies containing aspirin. This includes products with acetylsalicylate, salicylate, acetylsalicylic acid, ASA or salicylic acid. These ingredients can lead to them developing Reye's syndrome, a serious and potentially fatal disease that affects the neurological system. It is important to know the ingredients of any medications prior to administering them to children or teenagers.