

# Bayer launches Covid relief fund

As a key player in the pharmaceutical manufacturing industry in South Africa for over a century, Bayer South East Africa is standing by its commitment to "Health For All" by launching a new Covid-19 relief fund.



Source: Supplied

In partnership with the South Africa Medical and Education (SAME) Foundation, this initiative will provide much-needed equipment and psychological support to healthcare workers.

More than R3m has already been allocated to provide oxygen concentrators, respiratory masks and vaccine fridges and freezers in support of local hospitals and vulnerable communities. This assistance will be welcomed by many healthcare workers who now find themselves in the grip of a fourth wave. Currently over 6 000 new Covid cases per day are being added to the tally of over 3 million infections and nearly 90,000 deaths since the pandemic first hit South Africa in March last year.

## Supporting frontline workers

"The vaccination rollout has given us hope, but the job isn't done until support and access is available everywhere in the world," says Klaus Eckstein, senior Bayer representative in South East Africa. "Our various interventions aim to be responsive to the ever-changing surges and hotspots across our region, ensuring that facilities and frontline workers who need support get it as soon as possible," he says.

Oxygen concentrators, which have been in short supply during previous waves, and medical grade PPE to protect healthcare workers will be provided for, in addition to assistance with vaccine storage fridges and freezers, an urgent need in our largely under-resourced healthcare system.

## Unlimited telephonic counselling

Mental health support by way of unlimited telephonic counselling and support services to healthcare workers for three months is also part of this relief fund. In collaboration with ICAS, a leading global provider of wellness services, this resource is provided exclusively by a team of registered professionals, including psychologists, social workers, and registered counsellors, in all 11 official languages.

Bayer remains committed to helping navigate this challenging time, by standing next to those in need and at the frontline, providing resources and expertise.

“The Covid-19 pandemic has had and will continue to have a devastating impact around the world. It is paramount that we remain focused on continuing to use our influence and resources, as well as our compassion and commitment to social responsibility, to support and help communities worldwide,” Eckstein says.

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