



Dear PPS Healthcare Practitioner

One of the positives of the COVID-19 pandemic is the contributions from so many to deal with the crisis, from individuals to big corporates, who want little or nothing in return. There is still much goodwill in our world. We see a closer cooperation between government, the private sector and industry participants. We are likely to look back at this dark hour as an example of what is possible when politicians, government, business leaders and society decide to pull together.

We all need to do our bit, and I am proud that the PPS board has recently decided to contribute R25 million to fight the pandemic in South Africa. It has also reserved a further R25 million for possible future initiatives, as this will unfortunately be a long journey.

In deciding where this would make the biggest impact, our unique positioning amongst professionals and our relationship with professional associations were considered. We are also very conscious that health professionals, in particular are the frontline-soldiers in this war and need to be protected. It was therefore decided that a major portion of the money will be used to purchase personal protective equipment (PPE) for the safety of medical professionals in both the public and private sectors. The PPEs include N-95 masks, surgical masks, gloves, aprons and visors that comply with recognised quality standards and are procured from SAHPRA-licensed suppliers. We also acknowledge a generous donation of 100 000 3-ply surgical masks from PPE supplier Supra Healthcare.

We are aware that the government and other organisations are also involved in PPE procurement and we have consulted with them. It is after all a team effort. Due to our positioning as an organisation, we can plug certain gaps. A need for PPEs in the smaller private healthcare practices of pharmacists, doctors, dentists, physiotherapists, radiographers and optometrists was identified. We therefore created COVID-19 essential starter packs that will be distributed.

To distribute these starter packs appropriately to all corners of the country, PPS has partnered with the Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa and with Alpha Pharm. As a pharmaceutical distribution company, Alpha Pharm has an ideal footprint, even in remote areas, to distribute PPEs nationally through community pharmacies that they currently supply on a daily basis. These pharmacies will act as the collection points for the starter packs.

PPS has developed an online PPE application process. To ensure an equitable distribution of these scarce PPE items to where the need exists, applicants will have to answer a few verifying questions before the order will be approved and dispatched. Healthcare professionals in the frontline fighting the pandemic are strongly encouraged to apply for a PPS COVID-19 starter pack. PPEs are available to healthcare providers regardless of PPS membership. Orders will be collated daily and distributed via Alpha Pharm to the community pharmacy selected or deliver directly to applicants with an Alpha Pharm account.

Stock is limited and we trust that all applicants will be responsible when making use of this free supply. We shall advise applicants when stock has been depleted, and where possible, outstanding orders will be dispatched once supplies are replenished.

As an organisation that places the interests and well-being of professionals at the heart of our mutual ethos, we are proud to play our small part in helping to protect our country's pharmacists, doctors, dentists, physiotherapists, radiographers and other healthcare workers.

This is about saving lives. PPS salutes and thanks all healthcare practitioners in the front line for their dedication and selflessness during this time.