



health

Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



MEDIA STATEMENT

To: Editors & Health Journalists
Issued by: Department of Health
Date: Wednesday, 02 September 2026

Health Department, Stakeholders commemorate Pharmacy Month

Pretoria: The Department of Health, together with the South African Pharmacy Council, the Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa, and the Independent Community Pharmacy Association, will mark Pharmacy Month this September as part of ongoing efforts to communicate the use of medicines and underscores the wider contribution of pharmacists and pharmacy support personnel to patient care, public health, and equitable access to essential services.

Pharmacy Month seeks to educate the public about the many roles of the pharmacy profession, including chronic disease management, health education, vaccination, point-of-care testing, and community outreach. By highlighting pharmacy's impact across the full continuum of care, the campaign affirms the profession's central role in building healthier communities and advancing South Africa's progress toward Universal Health Coverage.

As medication experts and among the most accessible healthcare professionals, pharmacists are key drivers of healthcare innovation in all settings. Their deep knowledge of medicines, direct patient access, responsibility for medication management, collaborative practice, public health impact, use of technology, and contribution to continuity of care make them indispensable to the health system. Through their active involvement, innovative practices are integrated into routine care, improving patient outcomes, enhancing safety, and advancing overall healthcare quality.

The 2026 Pharmacy Month is being observed under the theme: ***"Ask Your Pharmacist. Your Pharmacist – Your Partner in Health."*** This theme serves to reposition pharmacists from being seen primarily as dispensers of medication to being recognized as accessible, trusted partners in holistic health care. It encourages the public to consult their pharmacist about available services, the correct use of medicines, and when referral to another healthcare professional is necessary.

Pharmacists deliver an expanding range of patient-centred services within their authorised scope of practice and in line with applicable requirements. These may include medicine therapy management, screening and health promotion, immunisation and injection services, chronic disease support, Primary Care Drug Therapy (PCDT), and Pharmacist-Initiated Management of Antiretroviral Therapy (PIMART). Members of the public are encouraged to ask their local pharmacy which authorised services are available.

The 2026 campaign also highlights the vital role of Pharmacy Support Personnel (PSP) as integral members of the pharmacy team. Working within their registered scope of practice and under appropriate supervision, PSPs support the safe preparation, supply, and distribution of medicines; stock management; patient services; and other pharmaceutical care activities. Pharmacy Month therefore recognises the contribution of the entire pharmacy team to accessible, high-quality healthcare and to progress toward Universal Health Coverage through National Health Insurance.

The campaign also promotes the safe compounding of medicines. Healthcare professionals and the public are reminded that compounded medicines should be prepared only when clinically appropriate and in compliance with the Medicines and Related Substances Act, the Pharmacy Act, relevant regulations, Good Pharmacy Practice requirements, and professional standards. Patients are encouraged to ask their pharmacist why a compounded medicine is needed, how it should be used and stored, and what information appears on its label.

Medicine quality and patient safety are central to Pharmacy Month. The public and healthcare professionals are urged to remain vigilant for possible substandard or falsified medicines, including products from unlicensed sources; items with suspicious packaging or labelling; altered expiry dates; unexpected appearance or quality; or medicines that do not produce the expected treatment effect. Suspected quality defects or falsified products should not be used and should be reported promptly to the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA) for investigation.

Electronic promotional materials, including posters and pamphlets, have been developed and are accessible in the official South African languages, including South African Sign Language (SASL). They can be downloaded from the following websites:

- **National Department of Health**
<https://www.health.gov.za/nhi-edp-comm/>
- **South African Pharmacy Council**
<https://www.sapc.za.org/PharmacyMonth>
- **Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa**
<https://www.pssa.org.za/>
- **Independent Community Pharmacy Association**
<https://icpa.co.za/pharmacy-month-2026/>

The public is encouraged to share their experiences of how pharmacy teams support healthier communities through the following hashtags:

#AskYourPharmacist, #YourPartnerInHealth and #PharmacyMonth2026.

For more information and media enquiries, please contact:

Mr Foster Mohale Health Departmental Spokesperson 0724323792 Foster.mohale@health.gov.za	Mr Glen Bvuma Manager: Communication and Media 0645013767 Glen.Bvuma@sapc.za.org
Shanaaz Bayat ICPA Media Spokesperson 0766554424 shanaaz@icpa.co.za	Prof Renier Coetzee PSSA President - Cell phone: 0833203586 recoetzee@uwc.ac.za