

Roche & CANSAs Celebrate the Health Professionals #BehindEveryPatient in South Africa for Breast Cancer Awareness Month

New campaign spotlights health professionals and carers who continue to provide critical care for breast cancer patients during the COVID-19 pandemic and makes donations to fund patient care and support

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (21 October 2020) – Roche Pharma South Africa and the Cancer Association of South Africa (CANSAs), in partnership with South African health care professionals and the public health system in South Africa, today announced the launch of the #BehindEveryPatient campaign to celebrate the health care professionals (HCPs), volunteers and caregivers who help patients during their breast cancer journey. The campaign aims to highlight the pivotal role HCPs and carers play inside and outside of the hospital to support breast cancer patients, particularly as South Africa navigates the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. For every unique story shared on social media using the #BehindEveryPatient hashtag, Roche will donate R25,00 directly to CANSAs to help fund patient care and support.

“As part of our commitment to defeating breast cancer, Roche and CANSAs joined forces to honour health professionals and carers - including caregivers at home - who are integral to breast cancer patients’ treatment and care,” said David Gibbons, General Manager of Roche Pharma South Africa. “By putting a spotlight on all of the people who walk the breast cancer journey alongside patients, this campaign is an opportunity to say ‘thank you’ for their tireless commitment to providing safe, effective breast cancer care, particularly during the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.”

With more than 14,000 new cases each year, breast cancer remains the most prevalent form of cancer among women in South Africa and it is also one of the leading causes of cancer-related death.¹ Breast cancer patients can face many challenges during the course of their care and the COVID-19 pandemic has created new challenges to accessing health services and maintaining treatment plans. The #BehindEveryPatient campaign recognizes the HCPs that have stood strong on the front lines during this challenging time, and who adapted care pathways to support and provide treatments to women when they need it.

“The breast cancer patient journey can be difficult, including health, mental, social and financial hurdles. As CANSAs, we aim to let patients know that they’re not alone,” said Cara Noble, National Relationship Manager, Service at CANSAs. “We thank the doctors, nurses, radiologists, pathologists, social workers, family caregivers and all those involved in providing breast cancer care both in the hospital and in the home. We are pleased to partner with Roche and we invite the patient community to share their stories of the people on their care team using the #BehindEveryPatient hashtag. Roche’s donations will help us do even more for patients.”

The #BehindEveryPatient campaign will share the stories of bravery, compassion and dedication from health care professionals and carers who not only deliver quality treatment and care but deliver hope and strength to their patients. The campaign will be run on social media, and all South Africans are

¹ International Agency for Research on Cancer (2018): <https://gco.iarc.fr/today/data/factsheets/populations/710-south-africa-fact-sheets.pdf>

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encouraged to use the #BehindEveryPatient hashtag to say ‘thank you’ or share stories that highlight critical role HCPs and carers play in the patient’s treatment journey.

“Every day, we see patients who are bravely fighting their breast cancer and I know I speak for all my medical colleagues when I say that we commend their courage,” said Dr. Devan Moodley, Oncologist at Wits Donald Gordon Medical Centre. “The medical community has been challenged by the pandemic but, in response, we have adapted care and treatment plans so that patients can continue to get the best care possible. We want to reassure patients that we are there to support them and provide treatments when they need it. When you need us, we are here.”

At the [Phelophepa Healthcare Train](#) event for Breast Cancer Awareness Month on Tuesday, 6 October, Minister of Health Dr. Zweli Mkhize also highlighted health professionals in his remarks, “Due to COVID-19, the risk is high but health care workers on the train continued to provide services to patients. This is the appreciation we have for all our healthcare workers who have gone all out knowing they might be exposing themselves to personal risk...I now wish to salute all the health care workers who made the sacrifices daily on this train and in other health services in the country.” The Phelophepa trains are free, mobile healthcare clinics that travel to areas of rural South Africa. Currently, the program is partnering with the Department of Health to provide free COVID-19 testing to people in underserved communities. Roche has been the main external partner of the Trains for over 25 years.

“For Roche, we work every day to do our part to ensure people in South Africa have access to quality health care,” Gibbons concluded. “We recognize that a strong health workforce is a critical piece of a strong health system. By working hand-in-hand with partners, including health care professionals, we can reduce the barriers and hurdles patients may encounter in their health journey. Now more than ever, it’s important to recognize and celebrate HCPs for their contributions, sacrifice and courage to meet patient needs during the pandemic.”

To learn more about the #BehindEveryPatient campaign, visit the [Behind Every Patient](#) page on Roche.com and to learn more about CANSA programmes, visit: <https://cansa.org.za/>

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About Roche

Roche is a global pioneer in pharmaceuticals and diagnostics focused on advancing science to improve people's lives. The combined strengths of pharmaceuticals and diagnostics under one roof have made Roche the leader in personalised healthcare – a strategy that aims to fit the right treatment to each patient in the best way possible.

Roche is the world's largest biotech company, with truly differentiated medicines in oncology, immunology, infectious diseases, ophthalmology and diseases of the central nervous system. Roche is also the world leader in in vitro diagnostics and tissue-based cancer diagnostics, and a frontrunner in diabetes management.

Founded in 1896, Roche continues to search for better ways to prevent, diagnose and treat diseases and make a sustainable contribution to society. The company also aims to improve patient access to medical innovations by working with all relevant stakeholders. More than thirty medicines developed by Roche are included in the World Health Organization Model Lists of Essential Medicines, among them life-saving antibiotics, antimalarials and cancer medicines. Moreover, for the eleventh consecutive year, Roche has been recognised as one of the most sustainable companies in the Pharmaceuticals Industry by the Dow Jones Sustainability Indices (DJSI).

The Roche Group, headquartered in Basel, Switzerland, is active in over 100 countries and in 2019 employed about 98,000 people worldwide. In 2019, Roche invested CHF 11.7 billion in R&D and posted sales of CHF 61.5 billion. Genentech, in the United States, is a wholly owned member of the Roche Group.

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About CANSA

CANSA offers a unique integrated service to the public and to all people affected by cancer. CANSA is a leading role-player in cancer research and the scientific findings and knowledge gained from our research are used to realign our health programmes, as well as strengthen our watchdog role to the greater benefit of the public. Our health programmes comprise health and education campaigns; CANSA Care Centres that offer a wide range of care and support services to those affected by cancer; stoma and other clinical support and organisational management; medical equipment hire, as well as a toll-free line to offer information and support. We offer a Tele Counselling service in seven languages free of charge and we also supply patient care and support in the form of 11 CANSA Care Homes in the main metropolitan areas for out-of-town cancer patients and CANSA-TLC lodging for parents and guardians of children undergoing cancer treatment.

Visit www.cansa.org.za or contact the nearest [CANSA Care Centre](#), call CANSA toll-free 0800 22 66 22 or email: info@cansa.org.za. In addition to [online resources and Facebook support groups](#), CANSA offers multi-lingual support on WhatsApp: 072 197 9305 for English and Afrikaans and 071 867 3530 for

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isiXhosa, isiZulu, siSwati, Sesotho and Setswana and free Tele Counselling per appointment on 0800 22 66 22 in English, Afrikaans, isiXhosa, isiZulu, siSwati, Sesotho and Setswana. Follow CANSA on Facebook: [CANSA The Cancer Association of South Africa](#), Twitter: [@CANSA](#) (<http://www.twitter.com/CANSA>), Instagram [@cancerassociationofsouthafrica](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Pinterest](#)

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