

MEDIA STATEMENT

UNISA Department of health Studies brings stakeholders together to engage on Schools Health Integrated Programme (SHIP)

**ATTENTION: EDITORS, PRODUCERS, EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL REPORTERS
DATE: 31 / JULY / 2017**

University of South Africa Department of Health Studies hosted its 5th annual School Health Convention under the auspices of the College of Human Sciences at the Muckleneuck Campus on the 27 July 2017. The theme of the convention was *School Health: A Panacea for Social Tribulations*.

The main purpose of the conference was to bring together stakeholders such as educators, health practitioners, community members, policy makers, researchers, civil society, faith based organisations, academics, students and parents to reflect and share experiences and expertise.

In 2012 at the launch of Unisa Schools Health Improvement Programme (SHIP) the Minister of Health Dr. Aaron Motsoaledi shared his vision of a healthy South Africa, the continent and the world. The Minister articulated pertinent health related concerns and the significance of School Health in particular. Embracing the concept of school health as a broad scale intervention strategy, the Minister called for a broad range of activities amongst other concerns; the prevention of alcohol & drug abuse as well as anti-smoking campaigns for schoolchildren: "Let's imagine a South Africa where learners reach university without having ever been tempted to smoke, abused illicit substances and/or alcohol without having gone through unplanned pregnancies or suffering from preventable diseases" said Motsoaledi.

Amongst the speakers at this year's convention were Dr. P. Ramathuba, MEC of Health in Limpopo Province, Dr. F. Kumalo, Executive Director, Department of Basic Education on Care & Support; Mrs. C. Pilane-Majake, Honourable M.P. and Justice & Correctional Service Committee portfolio, Mrs Lulama Tshabalala, Computer Engineer & IT Company Director as well as Prof FM Mulaudzi, CoD at University of Pretoria.

The speakers addressed the following issues concerning the integrated school health programme:



- Critical themes related to School Health were addressed: disability, teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, violence, alcohol, drug abuse and smoking among numerous others
- The collaboration between inter alia tertiary education community, Departments of health, education, social development and civil organisations
- Empowering of teachers so that they can serve as an effective vehicle to promote and practice School health programme.
- School health's quintile approach to alleviate poverty, screening for visual problems, correcting oral and dental health problems as barriers to learning

“As a leading Institution of higher learning, Unisa is deeply committed to playing its role in our country’s educational and developmental objectives through the alignment of our core business of Teaching & Learning, Research & Innovation and Community Engagement. For this reason, Unisa’s College of Human Sciences has institutionalized the School Health Improvement Programme (SHIP). The SHIP programme is a community engagement initiative meant to synchronize the interdisciplinary action required to enable its implementation”, concluded “Professor Mandla Makhanya, Unisa Principal and Vice Chancellor.

END

For interview requests, please contact Tommy Huma, on 072 218 6197 / 012 429 6390 and Edgar Rathelele on 082 059 9243 / 012 429 6930

ISSUED BY UNISA MEDIA AFFAIRS DIRECTORATE

FOR QUOTES AND INTERVIEWS, PLEASE CONTACT:

Mr Olga Makhubela-Nkhondo

School Health Improvement Programme (SHIP) Coordinator

College of Human Sciences

Department of Health Studies

Office 012-429 6588

Home 012 333 7082

Mobile 081 424 5961

