

22 November 2021

Debbie Derry
Deputy Director: Communication
Communication and Marketing
Nelson Mandela University

Dear Ms Derry

NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE ON ITS OPENING

We are delighted that a new medical school is opening in South Africa that would cater for the shortage of medical doctors and ensure that we meet our combined vision of transforming the health of our people within our region and beyond. We extend our support to you as we take this journey together. We rest assured in the belief that the medical education you will provide will produce excellent doctors equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to respond to challenges within our healthcare system and with the ability to transform patient care.

UKZN's Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine's journey to launch started in 1922 when Dr JB McCord and Dr Alan B Taylor started a private school in Durban for the training of African men as doctors. However, at that time the authorities who were tasked with approving medical qualifications were not prepared to recognize this qualification. Through much discussion amongst the then Natal University College, Health Department, Government and the University Council, in July 1950, the Medical School was established under the control of the University of Natal. We became the first medical university in South Africa to train Black South Africans. Despite attaining international stature over the years, we will always be remembered by all for our determination to succeed in the face of adversity.

You too have faced many hurdles. Your journey began in 1946 with a firm commitment to improve the lives of the disadvantaged communities in the Eastern Cape. Like the province of KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape is fraught with poverty, unemployment and a large rural community. As a new university committed to delivering proper healthcare for all communities, and contributing to urban renewal and development, we are reassured that the poorest communities in our country will benefit from having more qualified doctors produced by the Nelson Mandela University Medical School. Further, the clinical services that will be offered from your Missionvale Campus due to its location in the township areas of Missionvale and Zwive will serve the poorest of the poor which has always been the vision and mission of UKZN's Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine.

As we celebrate the opening of South Africa's 10th medical school, it could not have come at a better time for our country and the world as we take stock of the devastating and ongoing effects of the coronavirus. As medical schools, we not only bore the brunt of preparing our students to manage COVID-19 in the hospital setting but our staff were at the coal face of this epidemic. Sadly, many of us lost internationally renowned medical colleagues to the virus include your own former dean, Dr Lungile Pepeta. A man of integrity who dedicated his life to the service of others and who is sadly missed by all of us in the medical fraternity.

**School of Clinical Medicine
College of Health Sciences**

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Founding Campuses:  Edgewood  Howard College  Medical School  Pietermaritzburg  Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS

On this happy occasion, let us embrace the dawn of a new era in the medical training of a new cadre of medical doctors. We salute you for not giving up on the vision you had since 1946 and at this time extend our hearty congratulations and firm support from the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine.

May you grow from strength to strength.

Sincerely,








Prof Ncoza Dlova
Dean & Head of School: Clinical Medicine
Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine
University of KwaZulu-Natal

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