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5th December 2018

TO: All Media Houses

PRESS RELEASE – HEAT WAVE ALERT

The Public is informed that because of high temperatures being experienced in the country individuals may experience heat cramps, heat exhaustion, heat stroke and severe sunburn. Furthermore, the heat wave will affect old age group and specifically people with chronic diseases such as Hypertension, Asthma, Diabetes, Respiratory illness, and many more.

Extreme heat continues to be experienced throughout the country with day time temperatures reaching as high as 38-40 Degree Centigrade. This heat wave might continue for some time during this season until the end of February 2019. Excessive heat can cause death. The Ministry of Health and Wellness urges the public to take preventative measures to avoid heat related illnesses by observing the following health tips;

- Hydrate; drink plenty of water regularly and avoid alcohol.
- Replace Salt and Minerals - Heavy sweating removes salt and minerals from our body, which are necessary for normal body function. One of the best ways to replace salt and minerals is to drink fruit juices.
- Limit drinks with Alcohol and caffeine such as coffee, Tea,
- Wear loose fitting, light weight and light coloured cotton clothing that will cover as much skin as possible; avoid dark colours.
- Apply sunscreen lotions, wear sunglasses and hats before going out.
- Do not leave children and elderly people in closed vehicles or spaces.
- Limit outdoor games and activities or postpone them to early morning or evening to avoid exposure to excessive sunshine and extreme temperature changes. Take frequent breaks if you must work outdoors continuously.
- Avoid strenuous activity including Physical exercise even swimming
- Rest in shady areas and stay indoors as much as possible and be in the habit of wearing sunhats or use umbrellas
- People with chronic diseases (Diabetes, Hypertension, Heart Diseases, Asthma etc...) should take maximum precaution.

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Excessive heat presents with the following symptoms; headache, Fatigue/tiredness, Heat cramps (may lead to stroke), chipped lips, dehydration, excessive sweating, painful muscles, fainting, rapid pulse, confusion, nausea, dizziness and shallow breath.

Anyone experiencing any of the above symptoms should visit the nearest health facility for immediate health attention. Remember "Your Health is Your Responsibility".

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'RM' or similar initials.

Ruth Maphorisa
Permanent Secretary

Vision: A Healthy Nation by 2023
Values: Botho, Equity, Timeliness, Customer Focus, Teamwork,
Accountability

