

COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

Nomsa Mapungubwe*, a Community health worker (CHW) from Ekurhuleni, recently tested positive for Covid-19. She was advised by her Outreach Team Leader (OTL) not to mention this to people in her community as this might alarm them and they may reject her Ward based outreach team (WBOT).

The results were sent to her by SMS on the 13th of July as she was preparing to go to work in the morning. "I was shocked to learn of the results because I was doing everything we're told to do. I wouldn't leave home without a hand sanitizer in my bag or touch my eyes, nose and mouth without sanitizing my hands first" she said.

In late June; Nomsa started to experience flu symptoms such as fatigue and a runny nose but, she did not present with the main Covid-19 symptoms; shortness of breath, cough, fever and sore throat. The flu lasted for about three days and went away when she treated with flu medication from the clinic. At the time of experiencing what she thought was the flu, Nomsa and her colleagues were all tested for Covid-19 because they had been in contact with a positive Covid-19 patient. The results took two weeks to come back.

Nomsa feels that the delay of results is partly to blame for the spread of the Covid-19 virus. People don't wear masks at home or when they are with their close friends after testing because they have not received their test results. This might lead to them unknowingly infecting their family and friends. Nomsa advises that everyone take correct precautions and avoid gatherings.

*Not her real name.

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