



Dear Colleagues

We are undoubtedly in Day 25 of the Extended COVID-19 Lockdown.

While the extension is an unquestionable and necessary measure to help curb the spread of COVID-19, the two-weeks extension of what would have been a three-weeks lockdown could be a daunting reality for many of our employees as we continue to be confined in our homes, unable to see the loved ones and interact with the outside world. Without a doubt, this extension has brought frustration, panic, anxiety and stress in many aspects of our lives, and the unprecedented nature of the global pandemic, as well as the lockdown, has created a sense of shock in many people.

The emerging picture provided through the World Health Organisation (WHO), South African Department of Health (DOH) and media analysis shows that the virus continues to spread, and the number of deaths continue to escalate. How we are going to live our lives after the end of the lockdown is highly unknown, however, it is very evident from the emerging picture that it is likely to be an unprecedented, difficult, strenuous and painful journey that will require resilience, courage and extreme discipline from all of us. As uncertainty regarding the complexity of COVID-19 intensifies, the need for self-care, continuously building resilience, and showing care towards others and the community remain the only deterrent and unchangeable fact about what will pull us out of this calamity safe and strong.

While the CDC operations are continuing virtually and online wherever possible, the CDC executive management wants to ensure that all staff remain healthy, both physically and mentally. HR has been working to further increase the availability of and access to, counselling services to support the mental health of CDC employees through this period of lockdown and remote working. The CDC is a caring organisation and the health of the employees is of paramount importance. The CDC COVID-19 Team is working under very stressful conditions to coordinate the measures to minimise the impact of the corona virus pandemic. We need to watch out for one another, and particularly line managers to be alert to the unique needs of their team members during this time. We encourage all line managers to engage with team members by making use of the available online platforms. We must also be reminded that some of our colleagues are working from home in circumstances that are very different from the workplace, and therefore the importance of regular personal engagement during this time cannot be over-emphasised. Although some people think that isolation and loneliness are minor issues, they can become major issues if they are not dealt with effectively.

To equip us all with some of the critical information and knowledge to care for ourselves and our families in navigating a disconcerting time like this, we have prepared the COVID-19 e-Toolkit as your resource centre. It offers information and guidance on how to deal with your Physical, Emotional, Financial, and Psychosocial Well-being, including details on Virtual Trauma Debriefing options during lockdown.

For more information, please click on this link: http://extranet.coega.co.za/ealbum/content/Employee_Wellness_Support_-_During_the_COVID-19_Lockdown/index.html

HR will continue to offer the needed forms of support, including the coordination of services provided by Careways and the South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG). You are urged to read through the e-Toolkit and to visit the Careways website to remind yourselves of the services available to you and your family.

Let us continue to keep safe, and courageous with the full belief that we have the power and resolve to defeat the sting of this virus.

Kind regards,

COVID-19 Task Team