SEFAKO MAKGATHO
HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY

FOCUS on SMU

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Focus on Vaccines -

What you need to know

- Phaladi Seakgwe

Since the declaration of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020, a lot has been learnt as this has been an uncharacteristic medical emergency. A lot has been learnt 'on-the-job" and still there are a few grey areas. SMU Publications Editor Phaladi Seakgwe spoke to Dr Andrew Musyoki Deputy Head: South African Vaccination and Immunisation Centre and SMU Senior Lecturer and Course coordinator for MBCHB 3.

Phaladi Seakgwe (PS): There have been reports about people who have vaccinated before and still contracted the Corona virus, please enlighten us how this happens?

Dr Andrew Musyoki: There is currently no vaccine against any infectious disease that is 100% protective against infection. With that said, various vaccines have shown different rates of efficacy (how well the vaccine works in clinical trial settings) which is a factor of both the vaccine design and the host ability to respond to the vaccine challenge.

It is also important to consider the time from vaccination to when an individual test positive to Covid-19; A vaccine generally would take 2-4 weeks to trigger a reasonable immune response. In the days immediately after vaccination, the individual still is as vulnerable

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as any unvaccinated individual. This also means that for those taking vaccines that need multiple doses, one needs to have taken the complete schedule and allow the body to mount a good immune response (within 2-4weeks) before one can have adequate level of protection.

PS: What is the role of a vaccine, in this case the Covid-19 vaccine if people still contract the virus after vaccinating?

Dr Musyoki: Various vaccines are developed to meet certain primary endpoints. For all the current Covid-19 vaccines, the primary endpoint is to reduce disease severity, hospitalisation, and death due to SARS-Cov-2. Globally, **3.42 billion doses** have been **administered** including over 4 million in South Africa. Data from countries with high vaccination coverage such as Israel and the United States of America is showing that predominantly those who are now being admitted for critical care and die due to complications of Covid-19 are those who have not been vaccinated.

PS: There are several myths around vaccines, we have seen reports that thousands of teachers in Gauteng for instance said they will not vaccinate, perhaps due to the misinformation around vaccines, noting that this is voluntary, how best can we encourage people to vaccinate?

Dr Musyoki: Sharing credible information is the best way to reduce the anxiety around vaccines against Covid-19. Now that vaccines have been administered globally and there is encouraging data to support why every eligible person should be vaccinated, this needs to be shared widely in all possible avenues.

Locally, there are credible websites such as:

- www.sacoronavirus.co.za,
- www.nicd.ac.za and
- www.health.gov.za/covid19/

that offer the latest information on all aspects regarding Covid-19. The WHO and Unicef websites are among the most credible sources of information internationally. We should discourage the use of unverified sources of information especially the forwards in different social media platforms.

It is very important to remember it is criminal to share misinformation. One needs to respond to the sender and let them know this and advice to use credible source of information.

The other key part that all should be involved in, is to flood social media with positive messages.

PS: With other vaccines, you only take a single dose and others require 2 doses, why? In other words what is the difference, is it issues of efficacy or what is contained in a vaccine?

Dr Musyoki: The active component (antigen) of a vaccine is different from one vaccine to the other. The goal for vaccination is to train the immune system against infection by the organism of interest. The way the human immune system responds to the different antigens is also not the same. To some, the immune system would respond by producing higher levels of antibodies than others. However, with every time the immune system is challenged by the same antigen; it responds better, faster, and more robustly.

Among other factors that we learn during the initial stages of the vaccine development is how well the vaccine candidate stimulates the immune system. This contributes to what informs one vaccine type to be administered as one dose while others in multiple doses.

PS: What do we mean by immunity?

Dr Musyoki: With regards to vaccination, immunity refers to the state of the host defence system to fight infection. This is mainly the ability of the body cells to produces specific antibodies (specific components directed against an antigen) or to have cells with memory to recognise and fight a specific antigen or organism. The amount of these antibodies and specific cells in an individual constitutes the level of immunity in the individual.

PS: How long does it take for the body to develop immunity in the case of Covid-19?

Dr Musyoki: Most covid-19 vaccines have shown development of immunity from 2 weeks to 4 weeks. Again, one needs to have completed the vaccination schedule as recommended by the developer to be able to mount a reasonable defence. Currently only the Johnson and Johnson Covid-19 vaccine is a single dose while the Pfizer vaccine is a two-dose vaccine.

PS: From what age can one start vaccinating, is it necessary for children to vaccinate for Covid-19?

Dr Musyoki: As Covid-19 was recognised to affect the elderly population more, all Covid-19 vaccines were developed and tested in adults aged 18 years and older. Currently after further testing in the younger age group, the Pfizer/BioNTEC vaccine was recommended for use by children as young as 12 years. This is especially in the case of vulnerable children. It is important to note that children fare better than adults when infected.

PS: Can you spread the Corona virus after being vaccinated?

Dr Musyoki: In the unfortunate event of one getting infected after vaccination, the possibility of spreading the infection is there until the infection is cleared. It is very important to note that in the vaccinated person, the level of virus is expected to be much lower as the body will fight-off the infection more readily hence may be less infectious as compared to a person undergoing natural infection while not vaccinated.

PS: What are the ethical issues to be considered around vaccines?

Dr Musyoki: This is a very broad question that spans from personal rights to protection to global rights to access vaccines. I would like for everyone eligible for vaccination to consider the ethical responsibility to protect those who are unvaccinated and those not eligible to be vaccinated. Data has shown that the more people are vaccinated in any population, the less the adverse outcome of infection and at a critical mass, transmission of infection is stopped.

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Extracts from the VC's state of campus report

The Vice Chancellor Prof Peter Mbati presented the state of campus report to the SMU community. Below are extracts from the report focusing on labour and student protests. A series of highlights from the report will be published through global mail to the SMU community on an ongoing basis.

Nehawu strike

Following a protracted strike by Nehawu that started on 11th March 2021 over the 2021 salary increase and other demands related to staff benefits, the Vice Chancellor engaged with both the executive of Nehawu and on three different occasions addressed mass meetings. Labour rejected the initial salary offer of 3%. Following consultations with REMCO and the ECC, a final offer of 4.5% was accepted by labour and; a once off payment of 2,500 to eligible employees which would be dependent on the financial health of the university. Council was appraised on the status of the Nehawu strike on 20th and 27th May 2021.

Student protest

A day after the commencement of protest action by organised labour referred to above, the SRC also convened a Student Body Meeting (SBM) on 12 May 2021 out of which came about 55 demands for Management to respond to.

The Vice Chancellor together with members of the Senior Management Committee responded to these demands which were subsequently rejected by the SBM. The students held further SMB meetings with demands presented thereafter to management. In total the Vice Chancellor and members of management presented responses to students on a total of five occasions in the New Auditorium: 12 May 2021, 17 May 2021, 24 May 2021, 26 May 2021 and, finally on 02 June 2021.

In addressing the demands of the students, the Vice Chancellor convened special meetings of Senate, Executive Committee of Senate and the Extended Manco on various dates between 12 May 2021 and 02 June 2021. Special meetings of the School Boards were also convened by Deans to deliberate on some of the issues that impacted directly on the curriculum, assessments and professional bodies.

Management negotiated in good faith with students and presented responses which it believed were in the best interest of the students, the University and the future sustainability of the University and its core business. Following Management's lastresponse to the SBM on 02 June 2021, the student protest was called off on condition that the SRC would meet with MANCO to further engage and resolve the outstanding demands. In this regard Management has met with the SRC on 03, 04 and 07 June 2021.

Council was appraised on the status of the student protest on 20th May and 4th June 2021.

Some of the demands that students have raised fall outside the scope of management and will be addressed once Council presents its report on the outcomes of the forensic investigation of the procurement of laptops and, the report on the procurement of new residences with particular reference to South Point and Madeira. In the previous Council meeting the SRC had raised concerns about the process of procurement of residences and the Chair PRCC is dealing with this matter.

The combined effect of the Nehawu and student protest is that we have effectively lost four weeks of the academic calendar. A revised academic calendar to ensure that we catch up with the lost time was approved by the Executive Committee of Senate and shared with the University community.

In conclusion

(a) The security personnel were overwhelmed when gates were closed and were unable to guarantee access onto campus. In light of the existing interdict preventing people from blocking access onto campus, the public order police assisted in securing the main gate but were reluctant to venture inside the campus due to potential escalation of the conflict. In this regard, the VC will be presenting to Council a motivation to reconsider and review of the decision to ban the use of private security, in order to assist in ensuring access to the university campus during staff and student protests.

(b) Continuation of the Dialogue Project on a new SMU institutional culture – as it relates to blocking of University entrances and inaccessibility to the University whenever there is a protest action. Blocking access denies members of the community access for medical attention in the dental school. We also host the NHLS labs on campus, and when gates are closed, the staff of NHLS are unable to access their work stations. Further, many research activities, by staff, students and national/international partners are severely affected.

(c) **A compact agreement** between all the stakeholders is key to a new way of structures expressing their disagreements with management, but without compromising the core business of the University.

Prof Eunice Seekoe speaks about Community Engagement at SMU

INTRODUCTION

Community Engagement (CE) is an area of strategic focus at Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University (SMU). SMU aims to collaborate with the surrounding community of Ga-Rankuwa to share knowledge and resources and, in so doing, contribute to the social and health transformation of Ga-Rankuwa. The ultimate aspiration is that SMU's CE reach eventually extends to the entire province where the University is located (Gauteng) and internationally through teaching, learning and research. Through CE, we endeavour to encourage and deepen scholarship and engagement such that it is marked by staff and student collaboration with communities for the benefit of both. In so doing, SMU's CE outputs will become locally recognised, responsive and relevant due to community partnerships that meet individual, community, and populations' health, social, and economic needs.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AT SMU

Although SMU has made significant strides towards community engagement activities, it is essential to acknowledge that this has not always been the case. CE at SMU was previously occurring on an ad hoc basis. However, since SMU is classified as a comprehensive University, it needed structures to guide its CE strategic goals. Therefore, transforming how SMU conducted its CE activities has been the primary goal of the office of Prof Eunice Seekoe. At the beginning of her tenure, the office started by formalising a Senate Community Engagement Committee structure.

Furthermore, the development of the CE policy and operational plans to guide the implementation of the CE strategy were established and facilitated. Such developments have led to the introduction of seven new projects to the existing CE activities. The new projects were initiated as part of the SMU's Covid-19 response to the needs of its communities, staff and students. The projects are carried out by all the five (5) Schools of SMU, which forms the academic structure the University:

School of Medicine

One of the projects was the *Training on Covid-19. The project was* implemented under the leadership of Professor Dineo Mawela (Deputy Dean of School of Medicine) and her team. This project allowed the University to coordinate the arrival of different student cohorts on campus as per the lockdown provisions.

The second project implemented by the School of Medicine is the *Psychological Intervention Services* during the Covid-19: Concept model. The focus of this project was to provide psychological support to the University community, both staff and students. The services included screening for early detection of Mental Health issues, psychotherapeutic assessment and intervention to vulnerable and high-risk individuals. In conformity with social distancing regulations, screening and therapy sessions were conducted online. In cases where face-to-face therapeutic sessions were necessary, such sessions were conducted as per the prescribed Covid-19 regulations. The standard operating procedures were developed by the project leader, Dr Maepa, for use by MSc students who have been involved in the project. Students received training before they started this critical work. According to Prof Mawela, the MSc students complied with the HPCSA requirements and are supervised by the senior clinical Psychologist in their departments.

The School of Pharmacy

With a clear focus on reducing the risk of infection during the Covid-19 period, the School of Pharmacy collaborated with the School of Sciences and Technology on a project called 'clean and healthy hands'. Through the project, they aimed to improve the quality of infection control. To do this, the two schools decided to collaborate to develop alcohol-based sanitizers as these were found to be more effective than antimicrobial soaps. Furthermore, the project has been expandedto the Taxi Industry, where sanitizers and educational information is shared with the taxi industry community.

The School of Science and Technology

In addition to the joint project with the School of Pharmacy, the School of Science and Technology developed an educational awareness campaign on Covid-19. The campaign was carried out in selected rural communities in Ga-Rankuwa, North West, and Limpopo provinces. The School organised a team that visited the communities and spoke about Covid-19, social distancing, and good hygiene, including prevention of the spread of Covid-19.

The School of Health Care Sciences

The School implemented two projects—the first project was the food, nutrition and physical activities during self-quarantine in the era of Covid-19. The project focused on healthy eating during Covid-19 and self-quarantine. The project created a platform for sharing valuable information within communities regarding nutrition to help keep the immune system strong. The School provided tips on diets that support good health. The second project of the School of Health Care Sciences focused on developing Communication Borders for incubated patients in ICU, and that was a Pilot project for George Mukhari Academic Hospital.

The School of Oral Health Sciences

The School facilitated community outreach through political Ward Councilors for the various wards in community areas served by SMU (i.e. Soshanguve, Mabopane, Ga-Rankuwa, Atteridgeville and Mamelodi). Ward Councillors are recognised for their role as crucial community gatekeepers. As such, the project aims to establish a relationship between Ward Councillors and the University community.

CONCLUSION

Despite the challenges that came with Covid-19, CE at SMU has managed to make significant strides in its efforts. This has been possible largely due to the enthusiasm and involvement of Deans of Schools within SMU, stakeholders and communities. By leveraging relationships and skills, CE has the potential to not only make meaningful contributions to communities but to also reinforce the culture of ubuntu.

Prof Stephen Hendricks **appointed Chairperson of the Committee of Dental Deans**

- Maditsi Matlala

Maditsi Matlala spoke to Prof Stephen Hendricks on his appointment to chair the committee of dental deans and also looked at how Covid-19 affects the oral health space.

Maditsi Matlala (MM): Tell us about your appointment as the chair of the Committee of Dental Deans.

Prof Hendricks: The Committee of Dental Deans is a structure set up by Deans in their Capacity as academic leaders at Universities. This is my first term of 2 years for 2021 and 2022 as Chair of the Committee of Dental Deans. The Committee of Dental Deans is a Forum which seeks to engage on issues affecting Dental Schools, in the country.

MM: Your appointment is an expression of confidence the profession in SA, has in you and your school, at SMU. What is the significance of your appointment to this position?

Prof Hendricks: The appointment expresses confidence in SMU and in the Chair by the Fellow Dental Deans of South Africa.

MM: What are your roles and responsibilities in this position?

Prof Hendricks: To provide leadership, facilitate discussions with Fellow Deans on matters of academic, clinical and research affecting both undergraduate and postgraduate students. To give direction and advice on all matters of Dentistry as it affects Dental Schools in the country and to uphold Quality Education of Dentists, Oral Hygienists, Dental Therapists and Dental Specialists in the 6 categories of Dental Specialists in South Africa

MM: How will your position as the chair, benefit SMU and school of oral health sciences?

Prof Hendricks: It provides SMU an opportunity to set the pace on Dental matters in South Africa, to bring about new innovations in the Dental Curriculum, to promote transformation of Higher education as it affects Dentistry and to promote Oral Health Research both in SA and on the continent and globally.

MM: Are there any issues that you are hoping to address, as the chairman?

Prof Hendricks: This is my first term as Chairperson. My plans are to redress the inequities in access to Dental studies in South Africa, to ensure that we set up a College of Dentistry of South Africa (CDSA) that is transformed and that is representative, both in composition and in the nature of issues addressed and the solutions proposed, and put forward.

MM: What is that you hoping to change in the profession?

Prof Hendricks: To make the study of Dentistry, Oral Hygiene and Dental Therapy more accessible for our students coming from very disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds and to look into the issue of high schooling from which our student come to ensure that at such schools we have very good Maths and Science teachers. By so doing, work in harmony with school principals so that the products of the High Schools for our disadvantaged applicants can excel when they get to University. With regards to the professions of Dentistry, of Oral Hygiene and of Dental Therapy, is to ensure that we produce excellent leaders in these professions who will conduct practice in an exemplary manner as we prepare graduates for the new government proposed National Health Insurance (NHI) Funded System for South Africa.

MM: Your appointment comes at a critical time when the SA public health and internationally public health are being challenged by the COVID 19 pandemic. How will you lead the committee to respond to the challenges of COVID19 pandemic?

Prof Hendricks: In the presence of Covid 19, it is very important that all measures be taken to ensure the safety of the student, the patient and the attending clinical supervisor staff as well as that of the support staff. In Oral Health Services, there are considerable Aerosol generated due to the nature of Aerosol Generating Procedures (AGP) while doing dental procedures and so it is important that there are protection measures instituted. To this extent the Gauteng Department of Health (GDOH) BAC has approved the installation of AGP Equipment and there is a small team of Specialists working on it in the School of Oral Health Sciences (SOHS). The next phase is to improve the total Dental Hospital in terms of AGPs by installing a High Volume Air Conditione (HVAC) which extract the aerosol spray though HEPA filters and which would provide optimal safety.

Student Affairs Committee of Council visits key areas on and off campus to get first-hand information on challenges experienced by students

- Maditsi Matlala

The first fact finding mission, led by Ms Manare Mamabolo the chair of the Student Affairs Committee of Council (SACC), concluded that the complaints that the students raised, about the state of their residences, had merit. This finding was also confirmed by Mr Thabiso Lekoana, the chairperson of the Infrastructure and Finance Committee of SMU Council, also on his walkabout on campus.

The SACC spent two days inspecting residences and speaking to student residence leaders, residence managers and representatives of the owners of the residences in down town Pretoria, where students live. Focusing only on infrastructure, Mr Lekoana also engaged with the student leaders, institutional planning department and its technical services unit who were on hand to apprise him of developments.

The SACC, which is an advisory organ of council, was established to elevate student issues to council, in line with the SMU statute. It consists of three serving members of council, two deputy vice-chancellors and two Student Representative Council (SRC) members (SRC President and the chairperson of the Student Housing Committee). Ms Manare Mamabolo chairs the SACC. The following members, attend the meetings of the SACC on the basis of standing invitations, and they are - the Executive Director of Student Affairs and Residences, Deputy Registrar, Information and Communication (ICT) Director, Communication and Marketing Director and the Head of Safety and Security.

The fact finding missions culminated in the compilation of an action plan which was spearheaded by Dr Irene Mohasoa, the Executive Director of the Department of Student Affairs and Residences to address the challenges that have been identified, on and off campus. Top on the list is the delayed maintenance of residence facilities. Some of the facilities which need maintenance will be included in the 2021 funding application to the Department Higher Education and Training (DHET).

Renovations are underway at the Dr George Mukhari Academic Hospital (DGMAH). The stench at residence 2 B is receiving chemical treatment. The long term solution would involve closure of the 2 B residence for full scale repair work. The process is underway to procure circuit breakers and to close the distribution box at residence 5 A.

In order to deal with some of the challenges students are confronted with in the immediate term while the university is still exploring long term solutions, plumbers continue to drain water as and when needed from the electrical kiosk outside one residence. Rewiring of the distribution box and sealing off the area is also amongst the solutions considered being considered. It was revealed during the visits that maintenance of residence resources such as washing machines, dryers, hydro, boilers, geysers, at Drie Lilies, TVL, The Heights, South Point residences is delayed.

The committee also heard that students at all on and off campus residences are experiencing WIFI challenges. The owners of the Drie Lilies, Heights, Posterity, TVL, and South Point have received letters of demand to address WIFI challenges. Those students in Drie Lilies, experiencing WIFI problems were identified and their names submitted to university ICT to be provided with data to enable them to do their work without any further hindrance.

Lecture halls and laboratories are old. The university is also in the process of submitting funding proposals for smart class rooms, laboratories and skills simulation centre to DHET. In the interim, plans to procure the mobile laboratories have been actioned.

Tenders for the appointment of the service providers, for mobile food services were issued and bids have been received. Bids evaluation will commence soon. Plans are in place to appoint an engineer to attend to cracks appearing at the campus health building. Terms of reference for an external Emergency Management Service (EMS) provider have been approved and request for quotations have been issued.

There is no doubt that there are still some areas that require attention as raised by students and the university has assured them that these will be attended to.

Matsobane Tisane
shares his experiences of working at the Sports Injury Rehabilitation Unit (SIRU)

- Maditsi Matlala

Matsobane Tisane, a senior physiotherapy student, shared his views about working at SIRU. "Sports Physiotherapy can take you places you have never imagined, if you are passionate, work hard and always listen." These were the words that Mr Matsobane Tisane heard as a 1st year physiotherapy student, from Mr Muhammad Dawood, SIRU Manager.

At the time, all of the things Mr Dawood said and showed them, looked worlds away from his grasp. Yet he still chose to keep these words of wisdom, as his mantra. He took to heart all that Dawood and other lecturers taught them, such as to consistently exercise and come early to SIRU, for clinical work. These became part of his daily routine to hone his physiotherapy skills, knowledge and ultimately, professional development, whilst he was still a student.

According to Matsobane, SIRU became his personal real life learning centre exposing him to a variety of physiotherapy techniques such as strapping, sports patient analysis and treatment. However, at the time, it seemed as if it would only be left as good things to know, but would not be used any time soon, given COVID-19 restrictions, on sporting activities.

But he had always been a firm believer that success stems from good preparation. Belief in the unknown, became a reality when he was selected to be part of the four students, from SMU, to render clinical service at the Athletics South Africa Junior Championships, in April, at Paarl in the Western Cape.

Matsobane, along with Mr Sipho Sithole, Ms Mikayla Rothmann and Ms Anemike Schutte, went to the championship. There they met Ms Thabitha Mohlala who was the Chief Physiotherapist for the event. Dr Maki shared with him her whole professional journey - from why she decided to become a doctor in the first place, to how she became the first ever Banyana Banyana team doctor in 1998, to service in Athens Olympic Games in 2004. He had watched the games when he was just a 9 years old boy. But there he was, learning from Dr Maki, who had seen and done it all. This was awesome and inspirational, for him.

Using sports not only as a way to stay off the streets and its dangers was always uppermost in his mind. Hence he played for Mamelodi Sundowns Development whilst still in high school. But injury put paid to his dreams of playing professional soccer. As he had a strong academic foundation, he chose to fall back on physiotherapy studies.

He also met with the medical team from Gauteng Department of Sport at the championships, most notably, Dr Phalane.

Since his early days as a physiotherapy student, he had developed a habit of walking around sports grounds talking to athletes about the services SIRU provides. He did the same at the event which started to be beneficial towards him. Athletes approached him for help to improve their recovery in preparation for the next day.

On the second day of the event in the morning things were a bit slow but the organization was way better as they were allowed within the stadium from early on he decided to put strapping ice, rubs the bag and went to close to the track, especially after an incident of an athlete falling on the track and was seen being treated by a security guard. Being so close to the track, he saw a lot more athletes, coaches and tried to understand their exercise principles and routines and urged them to come by and use their services as it will all be for their performance benefits.

One of his highlights was when he treated an athlete who participates in 400 race, who he discovered, was a youth record holder in the 400 metre dash. As other athletes already knew the record holder, more athletes followed him and joined the queue to be treated by Matsobane. This was a show of confidence in him and he was happy to see the athlete he treated going on to win the 400 metre race.

Matsobane and other SIRU team members strapped athletes, helping with their warm ups and recovery. This became even more exceptional as a learning environment as athletes started to come with physical conditions where they assessed, diagnosed and treated not athletes, only as physiotherapists, but with the assistance of the Sports Doctor and Orthopaedic Surgeon also being on hand.

"I have never strapped, treated, diagnosed so many different patients within such as short period of time, having to come to complicated decisions whether it was safe or not for athletes to compete, knowing and understanding the severity of their conditions with it all being real life situations", he remembered.

Though he always believed SMU has so much potential and never understood why elite athletes did not consider SMU as their first point reference when requiring any form of sports rehabilitation. He however fell in love with the vision of SIRU as he believed it could make that long term idea a reality.

Transforming the spatial look and feel of SMU

- Maditsi Matlala

SMU has turned into a construction side. On a daily basis, trucks drive into campus carrying loads of building material with workmen and women in work suits and helmets to change the face of SMU for the better.

At these constructions sites, new buildings are going up from the ashes of old building that have been demolished including old ones that are being repurposed. Old infrastructure facilities are getting facelifts.

This massive construction and refurbishment programme is destined to go a long way not only to change the look and feel of campus, but will also improve the spatial experience of students, staff and stakeholders.

These projects are seeing the light of day courtesy of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) which approved funding applications from SMU, for 29 projects, in December 2019 and a further 4 projects in August 2020. So far, Millions have been allocated to fund the refurbishment of outdoor and indoor facilities.

These projects include the bulk water reticulation service, which is at stage 5, for which a contractor has been appointed and set to take off in approximately four weeks. The University boundary wall project, involves the erection of a ClearVu fence running for 3,8 kilometres which has been erected and 3,6 Kms long half solid concrete, soon to be built.

There has been significant progress made on outdoor projects that such as filling of the potholes and paving of the parking areas. The old tennis court has been converted into a multipurpose sports facility to play tennis, volley ball and netball. In so far as the electrification of the campus is concerned, five high mast lights have been installed at strategic spots on campus, to light up the paths that students criss-cross, from the main gate, all the way to their residences.

On the security front, Close Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras are being installed in 6 residences, at the student one stop building, oral health building and at the new clinic which has already been completed to improve the safety measures. Turnstiles are also being installed for security purposes.

In terms of the geyser replacement project, old geysers are being replaced and heat pumps installed in residences. The heat pumps are used to fast track the process of heating up the water first and thereafter pump the warm water into geyser, which heats the water further and faster.

To deal with challenges of power provision and minimise the impact of load shedding, nine standby generators are being installed to make sure that in the event of a power failure, electricity is available to the campus community – six are being installed at residences, two at lecture halls and one at the student cafeteria.

Nearby, the staff cafeteria is being constructed, which is 70 percent completed and the student pavilion which is near completion. The pavilion will have space for a variety of trade stores for the benefit of the students. The old animal production building is being converted into a pharmaceutical and chemistry laboratory for the school of pharmacy. A stone throw away, another is being converted into a Centre for Entrepreneurship Rapid Incubator (CfERI). Fire detection systems are to be upgraded in the CP Building, Skills Simulation Centre, NSB Building and residence 2A. Two space audits have been carried out in the main library and all teaching and learning facilities to check compliance with DHET space norms and the library with international trends in the view of the 4th Industrial Revolution.

The infrastructure related projects are geared towards giving SMU a facelift and improve the experience of both staff and students.

Upcoming EVENTS

Help us help the vulnerable by donating clothes of children between the ages of 1-21 years and non-perishable food items.

Donations must be dropped at the charity box in the Security Office at the SMU main gate orat the SMU FM Radio Station.

For more information contact:

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