



**Department of Health
SAHPRA**

Private Bag X828
Pretoria 0001

19 March 2020

Attention: DR BOITUMELO SEMETE-MAKOKOTLELA

CC:

Ms Portia Nkambule: Chief Regulatory Officer

M. Setlola Molepo: Assistant Director

Dr Kaizer Thembo: Dep Director CAMS Regulatory

Dr Neil Gower: Chairman CMC

Dear Dr Boitumelo Semete-Makokotlela

RE: UNDISRUPTED SUPPLY OF COMPLEMENTRY MEDICINES AND HEALTH SUPPLEMENTS IN THIS TIME OF CRISIS

The HPA represents the majority of the **Health, Wellness, Functional Medicine and Complementary Medicine and Health Supplement** Companies in South Africa. The monitoring of COVID-19 has received the Association's full attention and we are fully committed to being of service to the National Department of Health (NDoH); the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA) and Complementary and Alternative Medicines (CAMs) and Health Supplements industry in South Africa during this time of crisis.

The HPA's member companies provide essential services and products to all South Africans as relates to the entire paradigm of Complementary and Alternative Medicines (CAMs) and Health Supplements. These products providing **essential medicinal and health supplements** products are governed under The Medicines and Related Substances Act, 101 of 1965 (Regulations, 2017).

An HPA steering Committee is being established to implement the **CCMA's COVID-19 Coronavirus Response Plan** and to communicate the situation as it unfolds.

We hereby notify and plead that any interruption in the supply, distribution and sales of these essential medicinal products could endanger the life, health or personal wellbeing of millions of South Africans who rely on this industry for primary and preventative healthcare as a first step, as well as the integrative medicinal approach to integrative and functional medicine for chronic and life-threatening diseases as administered by and under the professional services of Complementary Medicine and Integrative healthcare practitioners, Medical Doctors and all HCP's registered with the Allied Health Professionals Council of South Africa (the AHPCSA).

The HPA and its member companies remain at the forefront of preserving and protecting our health care delivery system, including our health care workforce, so they can care for the least healthy individuals in the community for any medical condition, not just COVID-19 – and we are intent in being actively and collaboratively engaged in, and being part of, the Health care delivery system to continue to manufacture, distribute and provide good health and health products to millions of South Africans in order to effectively and collectively help to minimize the social and economic impacts of COVID-19 over the long run.

We inform you that these essential medicinal and health supplement products are available through retail outlets such as:

- **Pharmacies;**
- **Health Shops,**
- **Wellness Warehouse Stores and Clinics,**
- **Dispensing Doctors,**
- **Supermarkets,**
- **Spaza Shops,**
- **Stokvels,**
- **and various online channels and portals,**
- **as well as through direct selling via local distribution.**

Many of these essential medicines and health products are also manufactured in South Africa through **various GMP compliant manufacturing facilities** who remain dedicated and committed to manufacture and ensuring the continuous and adequate supply of such essential medicines and health products.

It is also important to note that as part of best business practice and supply chain processes the majority of CMs and Health Products are outsourced and distributed nationally through numerous specialized warehousing and distribution companies who remain fully operational to ensure uninterrupted supply of these products.

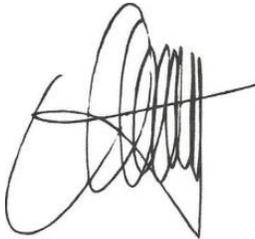
Having said this, please note that many of **these products are also imported into the country** and therefore given our current crisis, urge that these products are deemed to be classified as essential.

On behalf of the Complementary and Traditional Medicine, Health Supplement and Wellness industries who produce, manufacture, warehouse, distribute and sell these essential medicine and health products, we hereby submit an official request to the National Department of Health (NDoH) and the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA) to designate the manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, retail, direct and online supply chains of Complementary (including health supplements) and Traditional Medicines as “essential” to help mitigate interruptions in providing health and safety supplies during the outbreak.

We have directed this communication to SAHPRA and should it be deemed necessary and important that we make an additional submission to the National Department of Health, please kindly confirm this and we will redirect our communique accordingly.

We await your valued and urgent feedback please.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MARIA ASCENCAO', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

MARIA ASCENCAO

Chairperson

Health Products Association of Southern Africa

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"The HPA: Promoting and protecting the Health Products Industry"