

MEDIA STATEMENT

To: Editors & Health Journalists
Issued by: Department of Health
Date: Thursday, 26 June 2025

MINISTER OF HEALTH RESPONDS TO DISINFORMATION ON COVID-19 VACCINES

Pretoria: Minister of Health, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, has noted with serious concern a sustained campaign of misinformation and disinformation regarding the Covid-19 vaccines. This campaign appears to be led by some unscrupulous people promoting pure business interests who are determined to spread distorted and malicious information about alleged negative effects of the Covid-19 vaccines in order to promote their snake oil remedies that are detrimental to the health of South Africans.

According to our information, these actions are meant to hoodwink members of the public into buying fake heart medicine. This is done through mail order and the fake product is obviously not working or is making people feel even sicker.

The latest fake news campaign, driven by Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications, has targeted a distinguished South African scientist, Professor Salim Abdool Karim who is portrayed as warning South Africans about purportedly deadly effects of the Covid-19 vaccines that, as we all know, saved the lives of many South Africans during the difficult time of the pandemic.

It is noteworthy that both Professor Karim and the organisation he leads, the Centre for the AIDS Programme of Research in South Africa, otherwise known as CAPRISA, have distanced themselves from the fake news by imposing a FAKE NEWS stamp on all the circulating videos of the purported warning by Karim. The Department of Health has also done its part by joining the FAKE NEWS alert on social media.

Minister Motsoaledi condemns in the strongest terms possible the fake news campaign by these charlatans with business interests who for their nefarious reasons are determined to create confusion among the people for the sake of immoral profiteering. The Minister appeals to all and sundry to reject these remedies that purportedly cleanse victims blood vessels and improve the performance of the heart. Motsoaledi encourages all South Africans to continue to embrace all life-saving vaccines approved by the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA) and the National Department of Health.

The Department of Health will leave no stone unturned in fighting these evil forces whose mission will ultimately fail. The Minister therefore calls upon all South Africans to close ranks, isolate the forces of darkness and join the fight against misinformation and disinformation in the best interests of South Africa and all its people.

For more information and media enquiries, please contact:

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