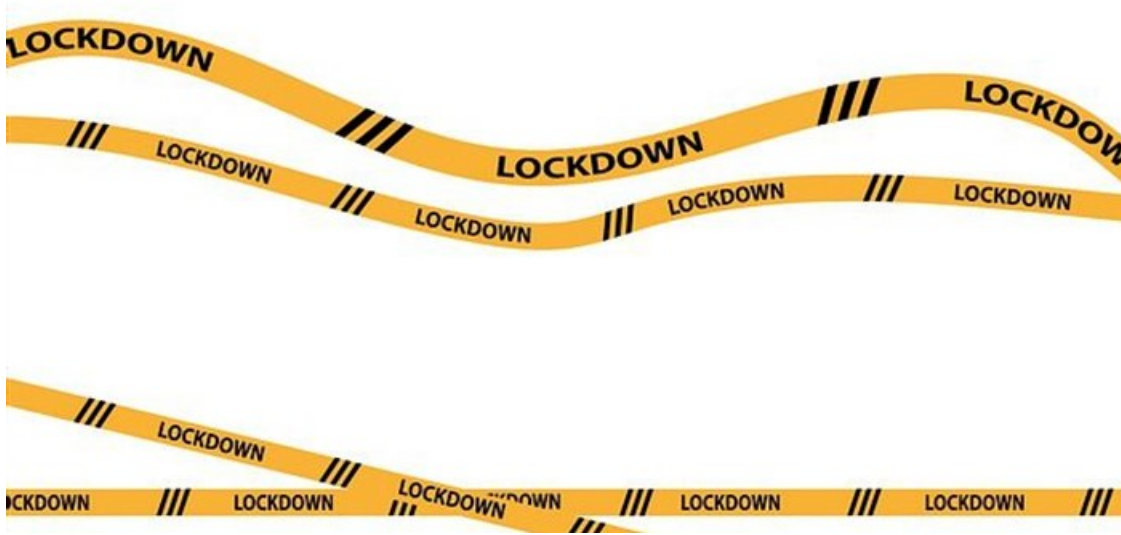


SAMA welcomes lifting of National State of Disaster

The South African Medical Association (SAMA) welcomes the lifting of the National State of Disaster (NSD) by President Cyril Ramaphosa as a positive step for South Africa and the correct move forward for the country's beleaguered economy.



Source: [Pixabay](#)

The NSD was instituted 750 days ago on 15 March 2020.

Considering the decreasing number of Covid-19 cases in the country, ending the NSD is the appropriate step in government's response to the pandemic. SAMA supports the decision in the same way that it supported the decision to institute the NSD as a means to deal with the impact of Covid-19 at the beginning of the pandemic.

Over the past two years, hospitals have been confronted with serious resource challenges, including human resources. Nevertheless, healthcare workers have contributed immensely, often at huge personal expense, to caring for patients.

Whilst the NSD has now ended, the President announced several transitional measures for the next 30 days. These include the compulsory wearing of face masks indoors, restrictions on the number of people at gatherings, and provisions relating to international travellers. SAMA supports these transitional restrictions. Furthermore, SAMA underscores that intensive campaigning for more people to vaccinate against Covid-19 needs to continue unabated despite the NSD being lifted.

The Association stresses that the medical profession has learnt many invaluable lessons during the pandemic that must

inform public health in South Africa into the future. SAMA will therefore make a submission on the draft of the new Health Regulations before 16 April, with a view to strengthening government's response to public health challenges and, ultimately, improving patient care throughout the country.

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