

SA cannot afford to lose more SMEs to Covid-19

Small businesses are crucial to the economy, and if they are not assisted to survive the Covid-19 pandemic, all South Africans are likely to feel the wider socio-economic consequences. A multilateral alliance has come together to provide small businesses with tools, skills and other resources as part of the national effort to limit the erosion of jobs.



Bianca Viljoen, spokesperson for Health Squared Medical Scheme.

“South Africa’s hard-working and innovative small businesses need our support now, or we will all feel the repercussions to our society if this vital economic driver loses its momentum,” says Bianca Viljoen, spokesperson for Health Squared Medical Scheme.

As she points out, communities’ local economies, whether rural or urban, rely greatly on small businesses as sources of employment to support families and stimulate other businesses in the area.

“By necessity, many of these small businesses have been, and in many cases still remain, unable to operate under the current lockdown regulations. We, therefore, were glad of the opportunity to support this vital sector through the Covid-19 Small Business Relief Centre,” adds Viljoen.

Partnerships offer help

The Covid-19 Small Business Relief Centre, of which Health Squared is a national sponsor, brings together experts in various business fields to share their experience, knowledge and resources to help small businesses to survive this difficult time and emerge better equipped for rapid business recovery.

Mike Anderson, founder and chief executive officer of the NSBC that launched the Covid-19 Small Business Relief Centre, says that more than 66% of the South African workforce is within small businesses.

“Those of us who are fortunate enough to be in a position to support local small business have a duty to our country to assist them now when it is needed most because we all have a stake in their continued survival.

“Through our consumer choices, sharing of intellectual or financial resources, or any other means at our disposal, I would urge individuals and corporates alike to assist and develop small businesses however they may be able to at this time.”

Health Squared’s contribution to the relief centre includes covering the costs to allow a thousand small businesses to become members of the NSBC and access all the resources this affords for business survival and growth, complementing the financial assistance available from the government.

“As the medical scheme that has members covered from every angle, pledging our support for small businesses through this initiative provides an opportunity to indirectly contribute to the communities in which they operate,” Viljoen emphasises.

“Covid-19 will likely change our local business landscape in many ways, however maximising the potential of small businesses to contribute to job creation, strengthening communities and building the economy can only be beneficial to society,” she concludes.

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