

Media Statement

Attention Journalists and News Editors

Pretoria, 10 October 2018

MINISTER BATHABILE DLAMINI ENCOURAGES A GENDERED LENS TO OBSERVATIONS OF WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY 2018

The Minister in the Presidency Responsible for Women, Minister Bathabile Dlamini, has called on all South Africans to consider the relationship between mental health and gender inequality today on World Mental Health Day.

“The layered and multiple forms of material and symbolic violence against women of all ages, classes, racial and social backgrounds have severe mental health consequences when no action is taken. The burden of economic exclusion, sexist discrimination in households and communities, and political violence can be very dire. Conditions are worse for women in rural areas where facilities, resources and public services are often not easily accessible” said the Minister.

Whereas World Mental Health Day is aimed at raising public awareness about mental health issues, South African’s must consider that women are more vulnerable, as they bear the burden of family-care, the risk of all forms of violence, the pain of economic discrimination, and psychological afflictions.

The theme for this year, as determined by the World Health Organization, is “Young People and Mental Health in a Changing World”. It is hoped that through this theme, South Africans will bring their attention to the plight of young women.

“Youth can be an exciting time. However, for many young women in South Africa, the continent and the world, it can also be a time of high stress and anxiety. For those from

poor backgrounds, this is exacerbated by the concern for an uncertain, unfunded future” continued the Minister.

The Minister therefore calls on all South Africans to consider, to reach out, and to support young women emotionally, economically, and through as many other means as possible. Women in tertiary institutions are particularly vulnerable as they are faced with the uncertainty of finance, Gender-Based Violence, and other systematic discriminations which can perpetuate mental illnesses.

The Minister also calls upon, and pleads with all women who are faced with mental health challenges to seek assistance. Those seeking urgent assistance should call the Mental health Information Line on 0800 567 567 or visit www.health.gov.za for more information.

For Enquiries

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