DEPRESSION - The silent killer

According to the World Health Organization, depression is the leading cause of ill health and disability worldwide. Its latest estimates show that more than 300 million people are living with depression, an increase of more than 18% between 2005 and 2015.

Depression is one of the prevalent mental disorders in South Africa:

- The lifetime prevalence of depression in SA is 9.7% or 4.5 Million
- Women are 2x more likely to suffer from depression than men
- About 20% of South Africans will experience a depressive disorder at least once in their lifetime
- There are 23 known suicides in South Africa per day (11% of all non-natural deaths). That's roughly 8000 suicides in South Africa each year.

- 70% of South Africans who attempted suicide had a mental health disorder
- For every person who commits a suicide, 10 attempt it
- In South Africa, small rural-based studies have found a prevalence rate of depressive symptomatology of 18% and a rate of depression of 27%.
- In an urban setting, a prevalence of depression of 25.2% in an urban setting, and a 34.7% prevalence of postpartum depression in a peri-urban settlement in Cape Town.

Research suggests that as many as 12% of South African university students experience anything from moderate to severe symptoms of depression.

- Depression may be caused by a combination of many factors. These include:
  - External events
  - Your genetic inheritance
  - An imbalance of brain chemicals
  - Certain medical conditions
  - Various medications
  - Substance abuse

Depression is a treatable condition and between 80% and 90% of people have a good response to treatment.
Depression has a serious impact on the South African Economy

Depression costs South Africa more than R218bn in lost productivity.

R190bn is attributable to presenteeism (attending work while unwell).

R28bn is attributable to absenteeism (unscheduled absence from work).

The cost of depression to the country is 42% higher than the value contributed by the tourism industry.

The cost of depression to the economy is 1.5x more than what the South African budget was for social protection in 2015.

The social impact of mental illness on patients in South Africa is concerning

- 17% cannot take care of dependents
- 26% are separate or divorced
- Lose friends (a key part of their support network)
- 47% experience negative family relationships
- 49%