



POLMED

OUR INVESTMENT OUR HEALTH OUR FUTURE



YOUR CARE POLMED

June 2026

**“A healthy family is
sacred territory”**

Anonymous

Dear POLMED Member,

June is a time to reflect on the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities.

This month, we explore how informed choices and simple actions can have a lasting impact on your health, whether that means prioritising preventative healthcare, helping to save lives through blood donation, or supporting the wellbeing of young people as they navigate the challenges of growing up.

We look at the importance of men's health and why regular check-ups, screenings and early intervention remain essential for long-term wellbeing. Too often, preventable health concerns go unaddressed simply because help is sought too late.

We also commemorate World Blood Donor Day on 14 June, recognising the vital role blood donors play in supporting healthcare systems and giving patients a second chance at life.

And as South Africa observes Youth Month, we highlight practical ways to support and protect youth health, helping young people build healthy habits that can benefit them throughout their lives.

Because good health is not built through one big decision. It is shaped by the choices we make every day.

Yours in health,
The YourCare Team

In this issue...

PROTECT YOUTH HEALTH THIS YOUTH MONTH

This month encourages us to consider the systems and support structures needed to help young people grow into healthy, confident adults.

[▶ READ MORE...](#)

WORLD BLOOD DONOR DAY: YOUR BLOOD CAN SAVE LIVES

Each year on 14 June, World Blood Donor Day recognises the individuals who donate blood and raises awareness of the ongoing need for safe, voluntary donation.

[▶ READ MORE...](#)

REAL MEN TAKE CARE OF THEIR HEALTH

June is World Men's Health Month, making it an ideal time to encourage men to prioritise their health.

[▶ READ MORE...](#)



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Protect Youth Health This Youth Month

In June, as South Africa reflects on the legacy of the youth of 1976, it's also an opportunity to highlight the wellbeing of today's youth, who continue to face complex social, emotional and health-related challenges.



This month encourages us to consider the systems and support structures needed to help young people grow into

HEALTHY, CONFIDENT ADULTS.

MENTAL HEALTH

Many teenagers and young adults face mental health challenges, including depression, anxiety and trauma, and academic and social pressures.

Suicide is the **sixth leading cause of death** among individuals aged between **15** and **24**.

Reducing stigma, encouraging open conversations, and providing and continually increasing access to counselling and support services can help create a safer space for young people.



SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Young people may experiment with substances due to curiosity, peer pressure or mental health issues or underlying mental health concerns. Substance use negatively affects academic performance and long-term health, particularly when it involves alcohol, tobacco or both.

Drug Awareness Week, observed during Youth Month, promotes prevention, early intervention, encourages open discussions about the dangers of substance use and promotes healthier coping alternatives, such as sports, creative arts and youth development programmes.

POLMED offers a dedicated mental health programme supported by qualified mental health case managers. Members and healthcare providers can request registration by calling **0860 765 633** or emailing polpsych@medscheme.co.za.



HEALTHY HABITS

Establishing healthy habits during adolescence lays the foundation for a healthier adulthood. Regular physical activity, balanced nutrition, adequate sleep and responsible digital habits all support physical, mental and emotional health.



POLMED is offering qualifying members an opportunity to lose excess weight in a healthy, sustainable way – under the guidance of biokineticists.

You may call us on **0860 765 633** (follow the voice prompts to the Disease Management Programme) between 08:30 and 17:00 Monday to Friday, or send an email to polmedwmp@medscheme.co.za

As we observe Youth Month, let's support and invest in the health and wellbeing of the next generation by empowering young people with the knowledge, resources and skills they need to make informed decisions.

REFERENCES:

- <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2025.09.09.25335400v1.full-text>
- <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P03093/P030932023.pdf>
- <https://www.mdpi.com/2076-328X/14/7/543>

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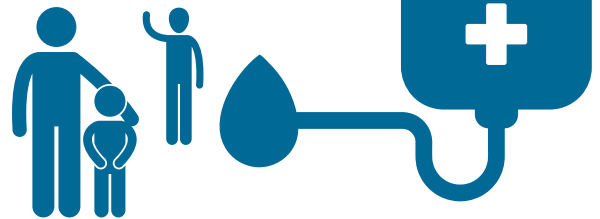
World Blood Donor Day: Your blood can save lives

Did you know that

**A SINGLE BLOOD
DONATION**



**CAN SAVE UP TO
THREE LIVES?**



Each year on 14 June, **World Blood Donor Day** recognises the individuals who donate blood and raises awareness of the ongoing need for safe, voluntary donation.



WHY BLOOD DONATION MATTERS

Despite significant medical advances, there's still no substitute for human blood. Blood is needed daily for:

- Accident and burn victims
- Surgical patients
- Mothers experiencing childbirth complications
- Individuals with severe anaemia
- People with chronic blood conditions such as haemophilia or sickle cell disease
- Cancer patients



But, as blood has a limited shelf life, a consistent supply is essential. **You can help to replenish supplies.**

WHO CAN DONATE BLOOD?

Many healthy adults can donate blood. All donors undergo a screening process, but first-time donors should ensure that they:

Are between **16** and **75** years old

Weigh at least **50kg** (55kg to donate platelets)

Are in good health

Lead a low-risk lifestyle

Have blood that's safe for transfusion (HIV-negative)

Have a pulse between **60** and **100** beats per minute

Have a blood pressure reading between **100 – 180 systolic** and between **60 – 100 diastolic**

Have a haemoglobin level of **12.0 g/dl** or above for females and **13.0 g/dl** for males

SAVE A LIFE

By donating blood regularly, you help sustain a life-saving chain that provides people with a second chance at life.

REFERENCES:

- <https://sanbs.org.za/who-can-donate-blood>
- <https://sanbs.org.za/why-donate-blood>
- <https://www.redcrossblood.org/donate-blood/how-to-donate/how-blood-donations-help.html>

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Real men take care of their health

Men are generally less likely than women to seek medical attention when symptoms arise.



This reluctance often leads to delayed diagnosis, poorer health outcomes and increased mortality. Men account for a higher **proportion of deaths, 53.5%, compared to 46.6% among women.**

June is World Men's Health Month, making it an ideal time to encourage men to prioritise their health. Many chronic conditions develop silently, and regular screenings are an effective way to detect diseases early and improve outcomes.

3 SCREENINGS THAT CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE

HYPERTENSION

Around **43% to 50%** of South African adults have high blood pressure. Yet, of the **15.6%** of South African adults under the age of 40 living with hypertension, only **24%** are aware of their condition. Untreated hypertension increases the risk of heart attack, stroke, heart failure and chronic kidney disease.

PROSTATE HEALTH

Prostate cancer affects over **4 000** South African men annually, and accounts for 13% of male cancer deaths. Regular digital rectal exams (DRE), discussions with your doctor, and, where appropriate, prostate-specific antigen (PSA) tests support early detection and improve treatment outcomes.

MENTAL HEALTH

While **70%** of women and **65%** of men report a need for mental health support, men tend to seek help less frequently, often due to stigma and perceptions of masculinity, which inform societal expectations. As a result, men are four times more likely to die by suicide than women.

Regular check-ups and open conversations with healthcare professionals can support early detection, effective treatment, enabling men to enjoy healthier, longer lives.

REFERENCE

- <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P03093/P030932022.pdf>
- <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41371-023-00873-3>
- <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/hypertension>
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Published: May 2026