

**The Eswatini Nurses Association (ENA)** is based in Manzini, **Eswatini** and provides services for health workers and their immediate families through their Eswatini Wellness Centre. The main aim of the Wellness Centre is to have a healthy and productive health care workforce which will then strengthen the health care systems of Eswatini. (What a concept!) They provide holistic support for their clients – ranging from treatment of physical ailments, to psychological services, to HIV testing and treatment, to family planning, to rehabilitative services, and much more. This holistic approach is the cornerstone of so much award-winning work in sub-Saharan Africa. It's too bad the rest of the world doesn't pay much attention.

*With support from the SLF and the CFNU, the Swaziland Nurses Association has been able to provide PPE to staff at their Wellness Centre. Photo provided by the Swaziland Nurses Association.*



In addition to their services at the Wellness Center, ENA also provides mobile outreach services to reach HCWs in their own communities and in their work places. These outreach services make support and health care more accessible for health care workers and their families.

As has happened all over the world, helping HCW deal with Covid and protect themselves has started to take up a great deal of time and energy. Read a summary report produced by the SLF for the Canadian Federation of Nurses' Unions, also a supporter. And/or check out their Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100067412268340>

(Most of the above information came directly from the One World Grannies website:

<https://oneworldgrannies.ca/2021/08/31/eswatini/>)

From: <https://nursesunions.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/International-Solidarity-Report.pdf>

### **”Update to CFNU and its Member Organizations from the Stephen Lewis Foundation March 2021**

Since 2017, the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions and its Member Organizations have partnered with the Stephen Lewis Foundation to provide vital support to the Swaziland Nurses Association (SNA) in Eswatini for their Wellness Centre. The Wellness Centre was founded to address the difficult working conditions that health care workers (HCWs) face in Eswatini, including the psychosocial burden of caring for clients and for family members affected by HIV, vulnerability to TB infection, and long hours that make accessing health services especially difficult. The Wellness Centre provides health and wellness services to HCWs through vital training, medical care and psychosocial support. The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly increased the challenges facing HCWs in Eswatini both personally and professionally. As CFNU members know all too well themselves, nurses and other HCWs have been called upon to provide additional services to the community during this pandemic, including screening and testing for COVID, at the same time that their mental health and well-being is threatened by fear, stress and anxiety related to the coronavirus itself, and to the impacts of lockdowns on their professional and personal lives. In Eswatini there have been critical shortages of personal protective equipment (PPE), which adds to the physical risks and emotional strain that HCWs face. The SNA has pivoted its programming to meet the changing needs of HCWs during COVID and to comply with lockdown restrictions. In the first few months of the pandemic, the SNA conducted 48 outdoor workshops for HCWs and the staff of the Wellness Centre about COVID prevention, including the correct wearing, removing and washing of cotton masks; proper hand washing; physical distancing; and isolation. Throughout the pandemic, they have continued to offer psychosocial support and counselling, treatment for noncommunicable diseases, screening and treatment for tuberculosis, and HIV testing and counselling. Of the HCWs that the SNA supports, more than 800 are living with HIV. The SNA continues to report a 97% treatment adherence rate for its clients living with HIV, an accomplishment that exceeds the national average and is of vital importance to reducing the vulnerability of people living with HIV to COVID. Even with the support provided by SNA's Wellness Centre, health care workers in Eswatini continue to be at a disproportionate risk of acquiring COVID due to their work on the front lines of the pandemic; there have been several deaths from COVID.”

Prepared by Laurie Wilson of the VG4A Education Working Group.

ENA is a community-based organization partnered by The Stephen Lewis Foundation, and other sponsors.

