

# GLOBAL HEALTH WEBINAR SERIES

Professor Taryn Young, Head of the Department of Global Health at Stellenbosch University, cordially invites you to a seminar on

## Sustaining the polio free status in south Africa is everybody's business: The SA Polio Eradication Initiatives



**SPEAKER:**

**Dr Simangele Mthethwa**

Medical Doctor and Epidemiologist  
(WHO)

Facilitated by Dr Juliet Nyasulu

Acting Head of the Division of Health Systems & Public Health  
and Chairperson for the South African Polio National certification committee

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**Thursday, 12 September 2024, 13:00 – 14:00 SAST**  
via MS Teams

**All are welcome!**

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**1 CPD**  
**point in**  
**Level 1**

## BACKGROUND TO POLIO FREE STATUS IN SOUTH AFRICA



South Africa was declared polio free in 2006. However, 11 years later, in 2017, the polio free status was revoked due to gaps in immunization coverage and polio surveillance systems. Through a lot of hard work with support from WHO, Afro and RSA offices and other partners, the polio free status was regained in Sept 2019 after the National Certification Committee (NCC) Chair presented evidence that the gaps have been addressed.

Currently, recovering from the COVID pandemic coupled with competing health priorities have negatively affected the Country's performance to maintain the gains achieved in 2019, a call to action! In this Webinar, Dr Simangele Mthethwa will be highlighting the polio eradication initiatives in south Africa, challenges and possible solutions to ensure sustenance of the polio free status

## ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Dr Simangele Mthethwa is a Medical Doctor and epidemiologist working for the World Health Organization (WHO), as the Vaccine Preventable Disease National Professional Officer (VPD-NPO) since 2022.

Dr Mthethwa has been working in public health programs namely the sexual reproductive health, HIV, and EPI programs since 2014 in various technical lead positions, focusing on policy, programme planning and implementation, capacity building, research and monitoring and evaluation. Prior to her public health career, she was medical professional and worked as a clinician for over 8 years through different clinical departments with varying roles.

Dr Mthethwa holds a Bachelor of Science degree with majors in chemistry and mathematics, a Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery (MBChB), a Master of Science degree in Epidemiology and Biostatistics, and multiple short course certificates. Outside her medical career, Dr Simangele loves and does farming as a small farmer on her own right.

