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UCT academics develop COVID-19 platform for less resourced communities

With a lot of false information being spread about COVID-19 and the urgent need to prevent the spread of the disease to less resourced communities, the University of Cape Town's (UCT) Global Surgery division in the Faculty of Health Sciences has developed a platform for reliable and accessible information dissemination for communities without access to smart technology or data.

In the first two days of launching this platform, Associate Professor Salome Maswime, head of Global Surgery said they reached over 1 000 households. "The simplicity, accuracy of the information and translations into different languages have been highly commended by users."

COVID-19 has affected more than a million people globally, and South Africa now has the highest number of people in Africa infected with the virus. South Africa is one of the most unequal countries in the world with the widest gap between the rich and the poor.

There is a lot of information available electronically, but most of it can only be accessed if the user has access to data. This widely accessible electronic platform will educate communities on the disease.

The platform uses a USSD code and is accessible without data – even for users without a smartphone. Dial *120*1341*100#.

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