




# Universal Health Coverage in Children's Palliative Care.

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A close-up photograph of a young boy with light brown hair and eyes, wearing a white shirt, gently holding a sleeping baby. The baby has reddish hair and is also wearing a white shirt. The boy's face is partially visible, looking towards the camera with a soft expression. The baby's face is in the foreground, eyes closed. The background is softly blurred, showing a hand resting near the baby's head.

# What is Palliative Care for Children?

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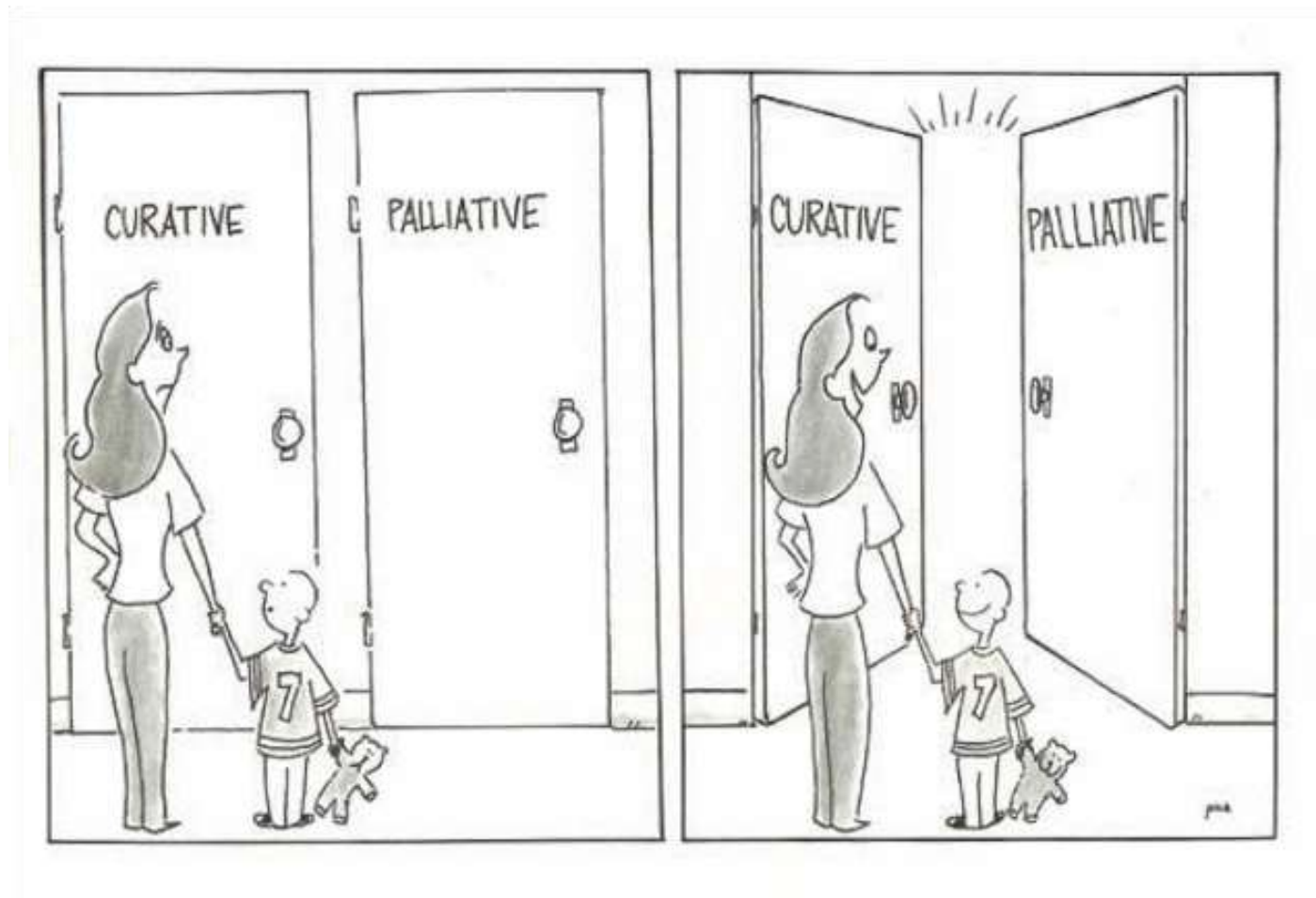
- **Holistic care** for the child with a life threatening or life limiting condition that Includes support for the family



# Palliative Care is not...about giving up



It's not about having to choose...



It's about the **relief of suffering**  
The provision of an **extra layer of support** for  
children and families facing extra-ordinary  
circumstances....



“It was the help that kept me sane during my child’s unimaginable journey”

Nombulelo Retyu

Bereaved mom and Paedspal board member



Palliative care is part of  
Universal Health Care

# UHC Theme for 2020:



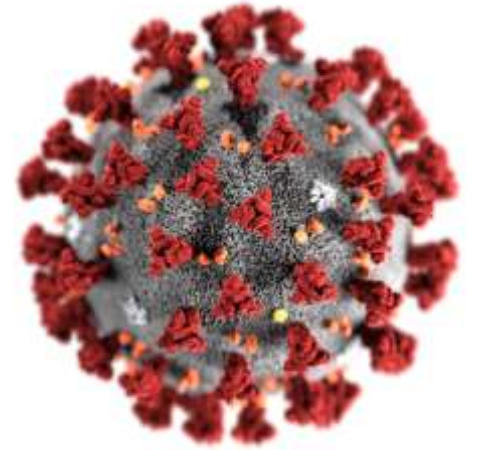
- UHC Day Campaign 2020 must remind the world that health for all is **not a long-term wish**, but an **urgent priority** to end this crisis (**COVID-19**) and emerge stronger.
- “HEALTH FOR ALL: PROTECT EVERYONE. To end this crisis and build a safer and healthier future, we must **invest in health systems that protect us all — now.**”



COVID-19 has revealed the cracks...



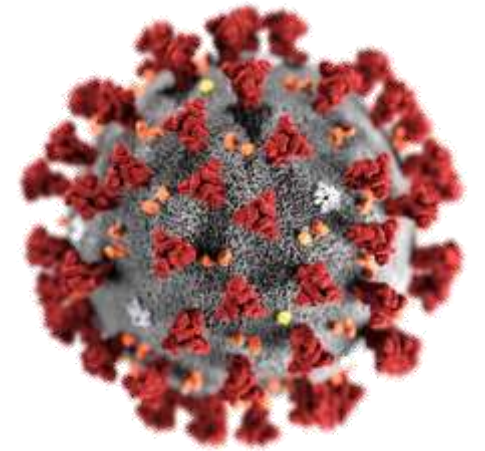
# What are the cracks/gaps?



- In a system largely focused on saving lives...
  - We still don't know what to do when we can't cure....
  - Need to improve our capacity to have honest conversations
  - Need to manage pain and distressing symptoms better
  - Need to provide more psychosocial support to families
  - Need to know how to ensure a “good death” where inevitable
  - Need to provide bereavement support
  - Health care workers need more debriefing and support- we need to care more for our carers
- Many of these gaps are in the ambit of the palliative care field

# A few more cracks/gaps?

- Mental health issues have been neglected for too long
- Children are still an afterthought.
- It's definitely not "Women and Children first!"
- Increasing rates of GBV and child abuse
- Impact of lockdown on children and child-health were underestimated and insufficiently planned for



Palliative care is not the panacea for all these gaps BUT it does offer significant protection...

Protection from :

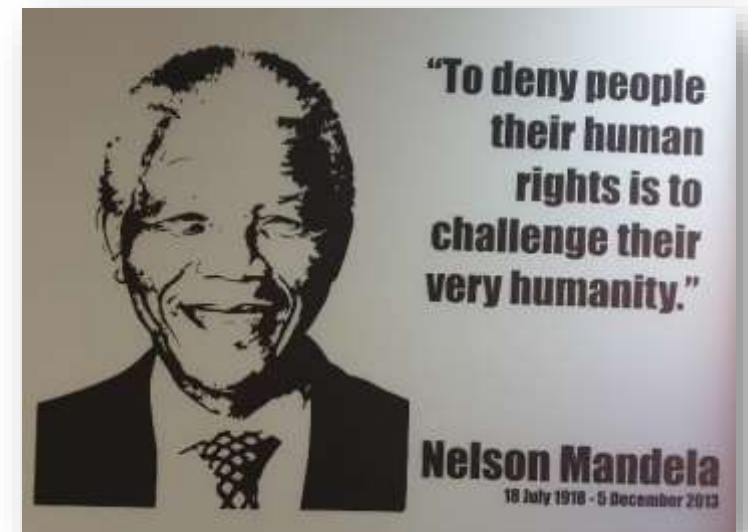
- Unnecessary suffering
- Longterm Mental Health Issues
- Complex grief
- Futile interventions
- Excessive health expenditure
- Burnout



# But it's seen as a low priority

- Perceived as a “soft science”/ “soft skills”
- A luxury and not an essential
- Failure to provide palliative care and esp pain relief is an infringement of the rights of the child
- Right to the highest attainable standard of health
  - (NOW....not progressively realisation)
- Right to dignity
- Freedom from torture

“There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way it treats its children” Nelson Mandela





Please don't  
leave the  
Children Behind

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Universal Health Care  
for all

Leave no one behind

