



umduduzi

Hospice Care for Children

#CPC by WhatsApp



Dr Julia Ambler

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



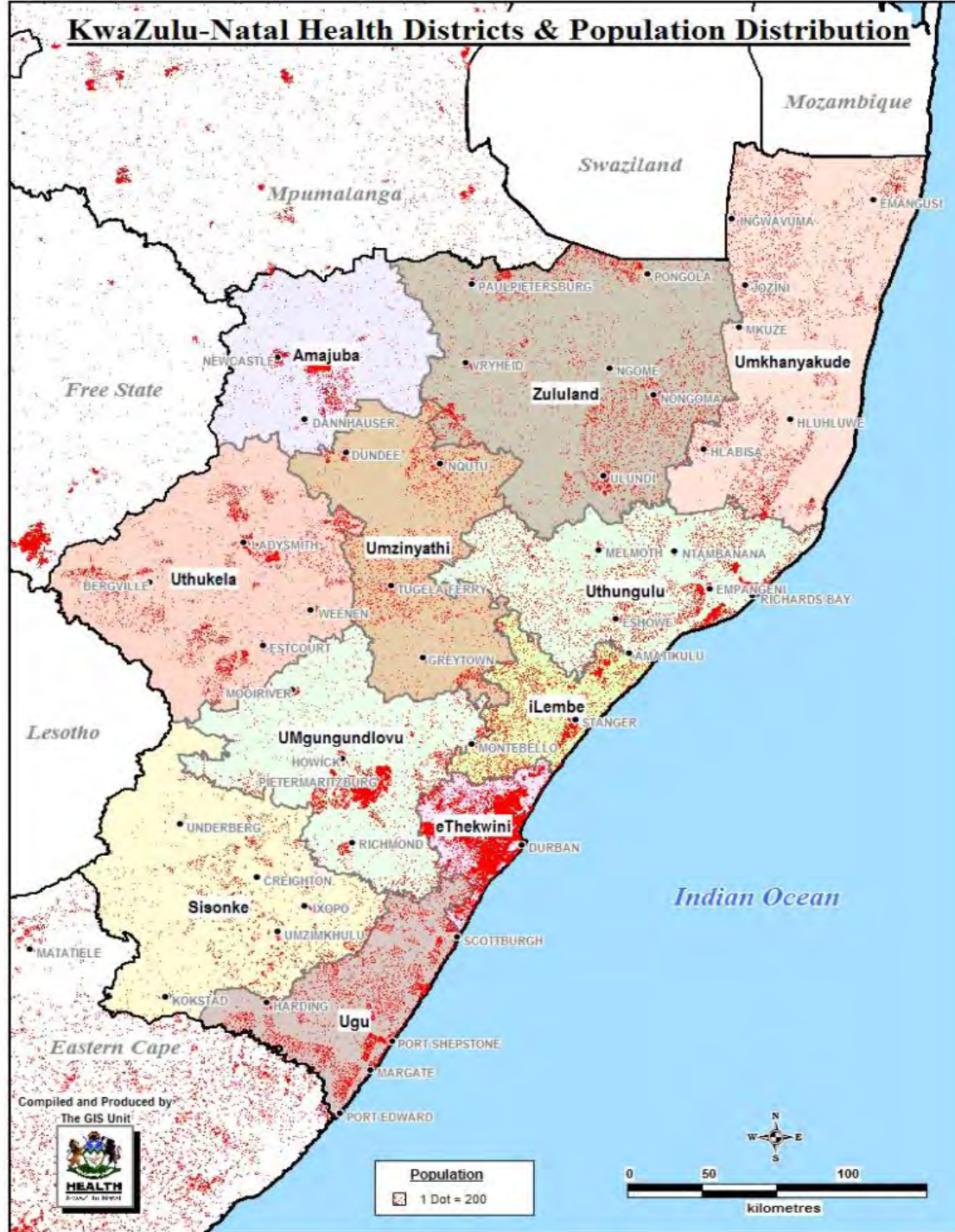
Background

Umduduzi – Hospice Care for Children is a hospital-based paediatric palliative care team based in eThekweni (Durban).

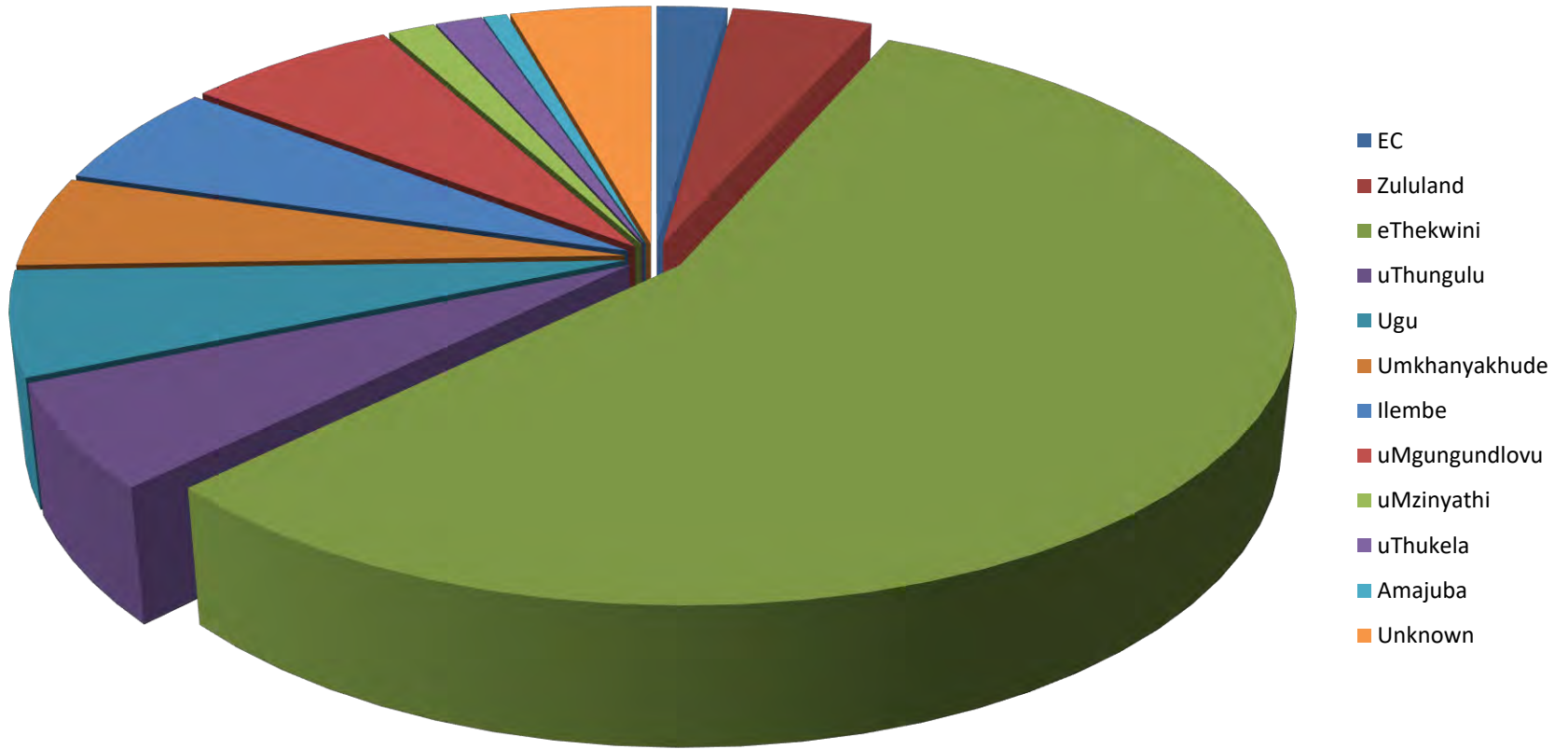
Estimated Population 2017

RSA	56,52 million	19 million children (29.6%)
KZN	11,1 million	2.2 million children (19.6%)

KwaZulu-Natal Health Districts & Population Distribution



Patient by Area



Method and Data Collected

- Retrospective analysis of parent communications by WhatsApp over the period of a year. (January to December 2017)
- Total number of WhatsApp Communications
- Total number of Parents using WhatsApp



Data collected continued

- Response Time of HCW
- Reason for Contact
 - symptom control
 - emotional, social, spiritual support
 - bereavement support
 - “spam” (memes, jokes, holiday wishes, request for employment)
 - emergencies
 - logistics (hospital appointments, cancellations and rescheduling)

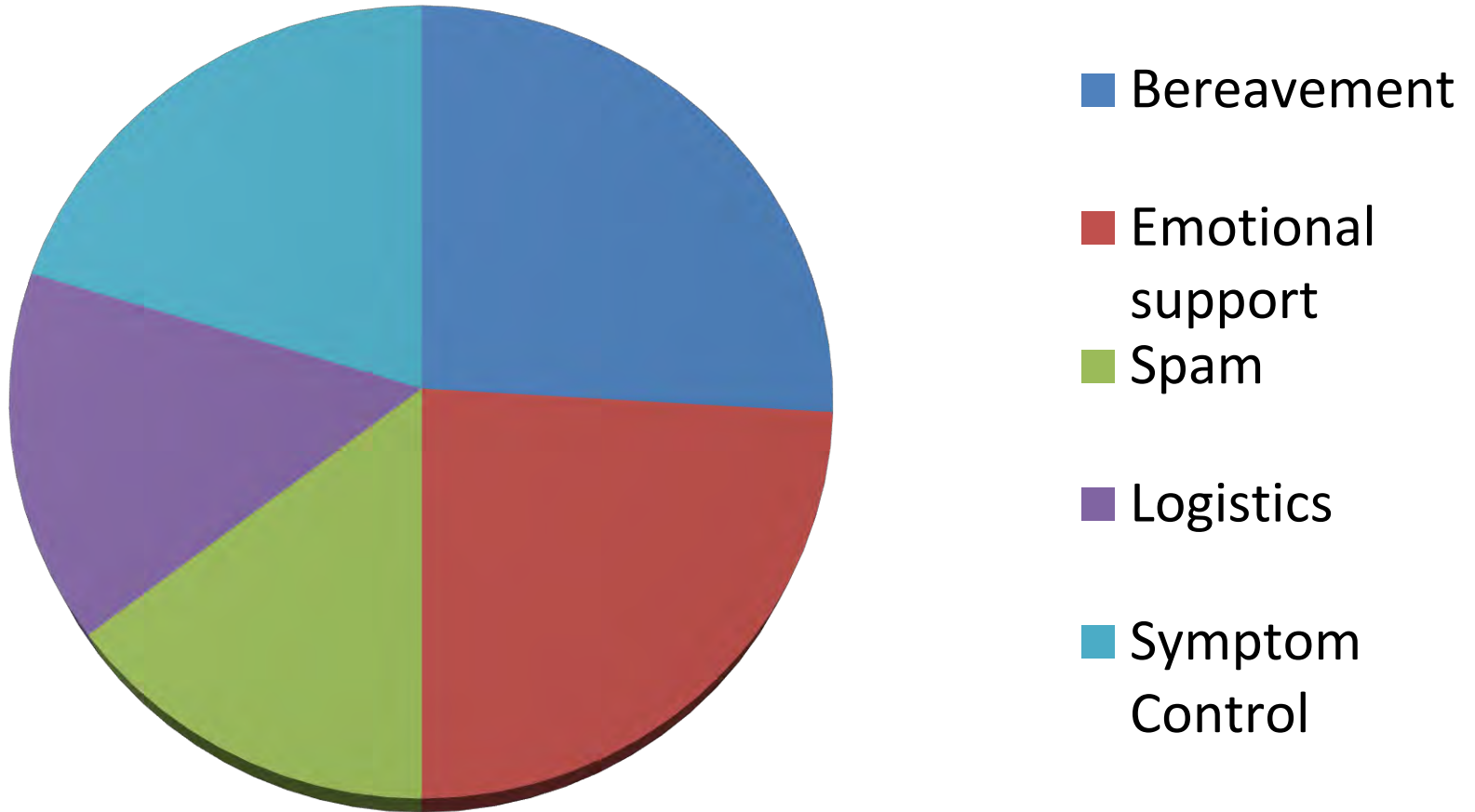
Results

Total number of WhatsApp communications/messages	8324
Total number of patients communicated with electronically in the study time	158
Number of total patient number using WhatsApp	151 (95%)
Number of patients using other methods (SMS, messenger)	7

HCW Response Time

Average time to respond	20 minutes
Shortest time to respond	Immediate
Longest time to respond	3 hours

Reason for Contact



Potential Problems Arising

For the patient

- Possible Delay in response
- No Data or Airtime
- No Cellular Signal
- Poorly timed bereavement messages

**NO
NETWORK
COVERAGE**



For the HCW

- Demands Immediacy
- Patient contact when on leave
- Allows out of hours contact
- Impingement on family time
- Blurring of boundaries
- Spam



Potential Problems Arising

System

- Adequate record keeping
- Confidentiality and POPI act compliance
- Lost or stolen phone
- Phones without password protection



The Protection of Personal Information Act



“POPI Act”

- Personal information – broad definition
- Onus is completely on HCW to protect patient information
- Collection requires consent of the patient
- Forms part of the medical record
- Breach – termination of employment, sanctions by counsel
- Damages up to ZAR 10 million and imprisonment
- Institution has to develop policy

Conclusion/Lessons learned

- **Parents are very willing and eager to use WhatsApp to communicate with the palliative care team for non-emergency situations. It is fast, cheap and effective**
- **The tool provides a permanent record of all conversations**
- **It is not appropriate for emergencies as there are too many variables**
- **WhatsApp has the potential to impact personal time and blur boundaries**
- **There are medicolegal implications to storing patient details on a hand held device – Umduduzi now has a POPI compliant social media policy.**



Thank you!

For references - Julia@umduduzi.co.za