

**96<sup>of</sup> 100**  
**Narisha**  
**Allan**



# Here to be Maternal

## Turning loss into a voice for maternal health.

After losing her daughter following severe pregnancy complications, Narisha Allan is using her experience to help other women recognise warning signs, ask questions and advocate for their health.

Narisha has built much of her adult life alongside her career at Absa. As she progressed professionally, she continued investing in her education, completing an Honours degree in Financial Management and pursuing her CIMA qualification, where she is currently at a strategic level.

Earlier this year, however, her life took a direction she could never have anticipated. During her second pregnancy, Narisha developed severe pre-eclampsia and HELLP syndrome, serious pregnancy complications that can threaten the health and lives of both

mother and baby. The complications resulted in the difficult decision to deliver her daughter, Elira Neriah, prematurely at just 26 weeks.

Before experiencing these complications herself, Narisha knew very little about them. In the months since losing her daughter, that lack of awareness has become part of what motivates her to speak openly about what happened.

She has begun using her experience to raise awareness about pre-eclampsia and HELLP syndrome, encouraging women and their families to recognise warning signs, ask questions and understand the importance of advocating for their health during pregnancy. It is work she hopes to grow so that it can eventually reach and support more women across South Africa.

For Narisha, returning to work also marks the beginning of a different chapter. Her ambition for her career has not changed; she remains committed to developing professionally as a Finance Business Partner and completing her CIMA qualification, but her understanding of social impact has broadened.

Achievement, she believes, is no longer measured only by what she accomplishes professionally; it is also about what she can do with her experiences and knowledge to help someone else. That purpose is particularly meaningful because it keeps her daughter's memory alive.

Narisha cannot change what happened to her daughter, but she can decide what she does with what she has learnt. If speaking about her experience helps another woman recognise a warning sign, ask another question or seek medical attention sooner, she believes Elira's short life can continue to have an impact.

It is an intensely personal beginning to an advocacy journey that is still taking shape. Through it, Narisha is turning one of the most difficult experiences of her life into an opportunity to create greater awareness, while continuing to build the career she has worked so hard for.

Your  
story  
matters

