

SAHRC: We don't want a recurrence of Life Esidimeni

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SAHRC: We don't want a recurrence of Life Esidimeni Updated June 25, 2019, 3:33 p.m. | By Sibahle Motha The South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) says it does not want a recurrence of events leading up to Life Esidimeni. by Sibahle Motha The commission's Gauteng manager Buang Jones made the comments shortly after a site visit at the George Mukhari hospital in Tshwane on Tuesday. The visit followed a request by the Public Servants Association, asking the commission to investigate possible human rights violations at the hospital's psychiatric unit. The complaints raised by the union include overcrowding, inadequate ablution facilities and inadequate beds. The PSA also claims that the hospital's psychiatric ward admitted 37 patients, when the capacity is 14. The hospital has disputed the figures stating that the female and male units do not take in more than 20 patients at a time. "We don't want a recurrence of a Life Esidimeni where the state has to use public funds to outsource this important health care service to our people," said Jones. "We may have to at some point have to conduct an unannounced visit at this facility and other facilities in Gauteng to gauge progress made by hospitals and the Department of Health in improving the state of our shabbier-looking health facilities in the province. It's not only unique to this hospital, but our primary concern is our mental health users and that is why we prioritised this visit here." The hospital's CEO, Professor John Ndimande, said although the hospital is overburdened with mental health patients, it's doing everything in its powers to deal with the challenges. He added that the hospital is renovating a new wing so that it could accommodate more patients