

FOR PSA MEMBERS: LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

04-11-2020

Labour Inspector visit: Polokwane Hospital

The PSA commends the Department of Employment and Labour for visiting Polokwane Hospital on 3 November 2020. This is against the background that the PSA challenged the earlier decision by the Department not to visit the health institutions and particularly that this hospital was at the centre of being supplied with substandard personal protective equipment (PPE).

This proactive inspection was aimed at establishing the Hospital's compliance with COVID-19 safety protocols and the health and safety of employees. The focus was, amongst others, on the handling of positive cases by the Hospital and implementation of safety protocols. The inspector further enquired on whether:

- The risk assessment was ever conducted,
- Cleaning was outsourced or done internal, and
- The Hospital received substandard PPE?

The employer indicated that all cleaning was done by hospital staff and COVID-19 was treated as any other infectious diseases. Further, the employer indicated that all PPE comes through pharmacy and some PPE had foreign language and thus it was difficult to know if the PPE was of medical standard and it relied on the supplier of the PPE to reassure if PPE complied with medical standards. The issue of billing employees for COVID-19 tests was also discussed as members were tested as a result of occupational exposure and the employer agreed that the billing of employees was incorrect, It will be investigated and corrected.

It was subsequently resolved that the employer will provide the labour inspector with the correct statistics of COVID-19 cases as current statistics were not readily available. The employer will conduct a risk assessment. It must be noted that the country is experiencing rising infections ("second wave") and members are advised to be careful and ensure compliance with safety controls (i.e. limit movements, wash hands with soap and sanitise, constantly wear face masks and maintain social distance).

Members and shop stewards are urged to ensure that non-compliance issues are reported to the PSA Provincial Office at queen.seema@psa.co.za or Whatsapp at 082 880 8995.

GENERAL MANAGER