

MEDIA RELEASE **COVID-19: Gauteng Health oblivious of impact on employees and patients**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is increasingly concerned about the conduct of the Gauteng Department of Health towards its employees in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic.

The PSA, as representative Union of thousands of health-care employees in the Province, received alarming reports from members at the Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital. It was reported that the spouses of three doctors at the Hospital recently visited Italy and Turkey. One of the spouses since tested positive for COVID-19 while the other two are still awaiting test results. These doctors are, however, being forced by management to continue working at the Hospital, despite the risks this poses to other employees and patients.

Staff employed at the Outpatients Departments (OPDs) of Health facilities continue with their duties without any protective equipments such as masks, gloves and limited hand sanitisers. The PSA recommends that during the COVID-19 containment period, OPDs be limited and that hospitals increase repetitive medication to avoid patients constantly returning for treatment.

The PSA is concerned that the management of the Gauteng Department of Health seems oblivious of the potential impact of the failure to provide employees with the required protective equipment and forcing staff members who are at risk to continue working.

The PSA therefore demands urgent clarity on the Gauteng Department of Health's departmental strategy to safeguard employees and patients who use these facilities during this crisis period.

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