

MEDIA RELEASE	Crisis at Weskoppies Psychiatric Hospital plunges patients and staff into darkness and danger
DATE	2 June 2026
EMBARGO	None
ENQUIRIES	communication@psa.co.za

The Public Servants Association (PSA) is extremely concerned about the catastrophic failure of governance and infrastructure at Weskoppies Psychiatric Hospital in Gauteng, which has created a safety emergency for healthcare workers and vulnerable psychiatric patients.

The Hospital is currently gripped by severe power outages, structural decay, and critical understaffing that threaten human lives. The ongoing blackout has forced night-shift nursing staff to bring candles to illuminate psychiatric wards. Operating a specialised mental-health facility in complete darkness with open flames is a major safety violation. This practice places frontline workers and psychiatric patients under severe, immediate physical danger.

The lack of electricity has halted basic humanitarian care during the coldest months of the year. Mental-health patients are forced to bath in cold water. The Hospital cannot provide hot beverages or warm meals, compromising patient health, triggering distress, and escalating behavioural volatility.

The historical Hospital buildings are completely dilapidated. Collapsing infrastructure poses an immediate physical risk to anyone entering the premises. The facility is fundamentally non-compliant with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)*, operating as an illegal and hazardous workplace. Management continues to freeze vital clinical vacancies, leaving dozens of essential nursing posts empty. Remaining skeleton staff members are overwhelmed, exhausted, and left entirely unprotected in an unlit, failing environment.

The PSA calls on the Department of Health to intervene immediately to restore power, temporarily deploying emergency high-capacity generators, fast-tracking the immediate recruitment of frontline nursing staff and launching urgent structural repairs to meet *OHSA* compliance. The PSA will not stand by whilst healthcare workers risk their lives, and vulnerable patients suffer owing to systemic neglect.

END

