

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA alarmed by unsafe food handling practices at Kalafong Hospital, Pretoria
DATE	10 June 2025
EMBARGO	None
ENQUIRIES	communication@psa.co.za

The Public Servants Association (PSA) is alarmed by unsafe and unhygienic food handling practices currently taking place at Kalafong Hospital in Atteridgeville, Pretoria.

Following complaints from the Union's members, the PSA conducted an oversight visit at the Hospital and confirmed that food service employees are being compelled to deliver uncovered meals to approximately 700 patients. This is owing to a shortage of essential tools of trade, with the Hospital having run out of plastic wrap used to cover food.

This alarming situation exposes patients and employees to serious health risks. Delivering food without appropriate covering contravenes basic food safety and infection control protocols whilst significantly increasing the risk of contamination and foodborne illnesses. Bacteria, viruses, and other harmful pathogens can easily contaminate exposed food, leading to potential outbreaks of food poisoning in the Hospital. Cross-contamination is also a major concern, as uncovered food may come into contact with contaminated surfaces, hands, or other food items. In addition, allergens present in uncovered food may trigger severe allergic reactions in sensitive patients. This unacceptable lapse in the Hospital's standards endangers the health of patients and the safety of employees working in food service. These employees are being forced to execute duties in unsafe and unethical conditions.

The Kalafong Hospital management has since requested the PSA to submit a formal letter, requesting a bilateral meeting to address the matter. The PSA has complied and emphasised the urgency of resolving this crisis. The PSA urges the Chief Executive Officer of Kalafong Hospital and the Gauteng Department of Health to urgently intervene and ensure that proper food safety measures are reinstated without delay. The current situation compromises the integrity of healthcare services and exposes employees and patients to unnecessary risk. This is not just a matter of operational oversight, but a critical public health concern that demands immediate action.

END