



<b>MEDIA RELEASE</b>	<b>PSA calls for enhancement of employee welfare initiatives following death of two Limpopo medical doctors</b>
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<b>EMBARGO</b>	None
<b>ENQUIRIES</b>	communication@psa.co.za

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) learnt with shock about the tragic death of two medical doctors who were found dead in their home in Polokwane, Limpopo.

It is distressing to lose young medical professionals in this way, particularly since Limpopo needs more doctors as most clinics have a shortage of doctors. Medical employees are stressed by a demanding work environment, which can easily spill into their personal lives and making it difficult to cope. The Department of Health must prioritise the wellness of its employees, including regular debriefing sessions to enhance coping mechanisms.

The PSA also calls on the Limpopo Provincial Government to continuously conduct climate surveys to determine stress levels amongst its employees and implement proper interventions when necessary. Sport and recreation programmes should be considered for health workers who are constantly under pressure and overworked owing to chronic staff shortages. The filling of the posts should be fast-tracked to alleviate the burden and allow for a proper work-life balance.

The number of incidents of employees killing themselves and their partners is extremely worrying. The PSA has noted with serious concern that most of these incidents happen amongst young professionals who are not only breadwinners but also parents of young children who are then left vulnerable. There is a need for more interventions to assist employees to cope with not only work problems but also domestic issues. The PSA calls on the Health Department to consider employing chaplains similar to the SA Police Service, the Department of Correctional Services, and the Defence Force to support its employees who are also exposed to continuous life-threatening and depressing situations in the line of duty. The PSA also appeals to employees to seek assistance help when in need of support.

The PSA extends sincere condolences to the family, employer, and colleagues of the victims, whilst noting that the Department is still recovering from the pain of losing two EMS employees.

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