

MEDIA RELEASE **PSA calls for immediate placement and appointment of more than 700 unemployed doctors in KwaZulu-Natal**

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EMBARGO None

ENQUIRIES communication@psa.co.za

In a time of critical healthcare challenges in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), the Public Servants Association of South Africa (PSA) urgently calls for the swift placement and appointment of more than over 700 unemployed doctors.

The PSA is extremely concerned about the severe shortage of doctors in hospitals, community health centres, and clinics. The crisis stems from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health's failure to appoint more doctors and allocate them to community services in line with their qualifications.

Dedicated employees in the public health system face significant hurdles as they grapple with challenges owing to a scarcity of doctors, thus hindering their ability to provide essential care to communities. KwaZulu-Natal has more than 700 unemployed doctors, who are forced to seek opportunities in other countries owing to inadequate planning by the Provincial Health Department and budget cuts by the Office of the Premier and Provincial Treasury.

The PSA urgently calls for the immediate creation of doctors' posts and advertisement of such vacancies. Funding from National Treasury should support the province in this time of need. The Kwazulu-Natal Department of Health's practice of concealing the number of vacancies and erasing posts held by former doctors instead of replacing them, exacerbates the already critical healthcare crisis. In addition, the eagerness of doctors from impoverished backgrounds to serve their communities, is obstructed by the absence of opportunities.

The mass shortage of doctors remains a major challenge. Government must fulfil its obligation to appoint more medical professionals, especially when where health facilities operate with minimum staff. Healthcare employees face attacks from frustrated members of the public, underscoring the urgency of the situation. Delays in receiving medical attention persist owing to increasing numbers of patients and the shortage of doctors and nurses at healthcare facilities.

The PSA emphasizes government's duty to prioritise appoint local doctors over foreign nationals to address the critical situation and safeguard the health of communities. The PSA urges the MECs of Health and Finance, the Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, and the National Minister of Health to intervene in this doctors' unemployment crisis and recognise the healthcare needs of the citizens of KwaZulu-Natal.

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