

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA calls for improved security measures and infrastructure at Mpumalanga health facilities following attack at Barberton Hospital
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is extremely concerned about the safety of healthcare workers following a recent disturbing incident at Barberton Hospital in Mpumalanga.

Over the past weekend, a group of armed intruders stormed the Hospital during the night shift, threatening doctors and nurses whilst demanding immediate medical attention for their associates. The healthcare workers were forced to flee for their lives, highlighting the serious lack of security at the facility.

The PSA strongly condemns this incident and calls for urgent reinforcement of security measures and improvement of infrastructure in health facilities across Mpumalanga. In response to the incident, the PSA acted swiftly and met with the acting Head of the Department of Health and the Head of the Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison on 4 June 2025. The PSA expressed grave concerns, noting that this was not the first such incident at healthcare facilities in Mpumalanga. The increasing trend of attacks and threats against healthcare workers indicates that security is not prioritised by the Department of Health and the Provincial Government.

Following the PSA's intervention, the employer has deployed four additional security guards and stationed an armed response team with a branded vehicle at Barberton Hospital. In addition, the Department committed to repairing the Hospital's main gate by the end of the week and deploying an Expanded Public Works Programme team to maintain the Hospital grounds, including trimming overgrown trees that pose security risks. Further commitments include repairing the Hospital's perimeter fence and improving lighting around the facility. Discussions with both Departments are ongoing and the Heads of Department have committed to convening regular quarterly meetings with organised labour to address and monitor security challenges at various healthcare sites across Mpumalanga.

The PSA is committed to ensuring that the safety of public-sector workers is not compromised and will continue to hold the employer accountable for compliance with occupational health and safety standards.

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