

MEDIA RELEASE COVID-19: PSA calls for suspension of Gauteng Health HOD

DATE 26 August 2020

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) calls on the acting MEC of Health, Mr Jacob Mamabolo, to immediately suspend the Head (HOD) of the Department of Health, Prof Mkhululi Lukhele, for reasons relating to the procurement of personal protective equipment (PPE) during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The PSA has been carefully monitoring the procurement of PPE and wrote to Prof Lukhele, requesting clarity on matters relating to the procurement of PPE. The HOD has, to date, failed to provide answers to the PSA's questions. This is also not the first matter relating to procurement where the PSA is still awaiting a response from the HOD. The other questionable procurement processes relate to Occupational Health and Information Safety Systems (OHASIS) and the partnership with IPM and SABPP. These two items have been on the agenda of the Department's bargaining chamber for more than a year without any response from the HOD. Fundamentally, Prof Lukhele is the Accounting Officer for the Gauteng Department of Health. His failure to account for questionable procurement practices paves the way for a further collapse of the Gauteng Health budget.

The PSA is aware that some companies were paid for the procurement of PPE without them being on the central system of procurement. Other companies involved do not have tax numbers. The PSA therefore welcomes the probe by the Special Investigating Unit into 102 companies that received PPE-related tenders for COVID-19. The PSA also demands that the investigation should not exclude the sudden resignation of the Chief Financial Officer, Ms Kabelo Lehoenya, in the wake of questionable practices during her tenure.

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