

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA calls on Minister of Health to prioritise permanent appointment of Mentor Mothers, Peer Educators, and Lay Counsellors
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) urges the Minister of Health to address the prolonged failure to permanently appoint Mentor Mothers, Peer Educators, and Lay Counsellors who are critical frontline workers at the core of community-based health services.

These workers' colleagues, Community Health Workers, are appointed permanently. For several years, this grouping of workers have carried the weight of essential healthcare functions, including HIV/Aids counselling, TB-adherence support, maternal and child health guidance, community outreach, and psychosocial support. Despite the vital nature of their work and their consistent contribution to South Africa's public health outcomes, many remain employed on temporary, insecure, and often underfunded contracts.

The continued reliance on a precariously contracted workforce places service delivery and community health outcomes at risk. With chronic staff shortages, increasing patient loads, and ongoing public health challenges, the permanent appointment of these workers is a national imperative.

The PSA is extremely concerned that the lack of employment security has resulted in high turnover, emotional strain, and job insecurity for workers who provide some of the most sensitive and lifesaving services in the healthcare system. They build trust with vulnerable communities and ensure continuity of care. Their instability translates directly into gaps in service delivery at facility and community levels.

The PSA therefore calls on the Minister of Health to urgently prioritise and finalise the creation of permanent posts for Mentor Mothers, Peer Educators, and Lay Counsellors in the public-health establishment. The PSA will endeavour to meaningfully engage with the Minister to ensure that clear timelines and implementation processes are agreed upon. The permanent appointment of these workers will ensure equitable remuneration, job security, and career progression pathways for all affected health workers. The PSA is ready to engage constructively with the Minister and the Department of Health to resolve this long-standing matter.

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