

MEDIA RELEASE **PSA concerned about Gauteng Department of Health collapse**

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EMBARGO None

ENQUIRIES communication@psa.co.za

The Public Servants Association (PSA) is extremely concerned about serious and ongoing issues at the Gauteng Department of Health (GDOH), signalling a systemic collapse.

Despite numerous engagements with the MEC and the Head of Department, no effective action has been taken. Employees, particularly in Emergency Medical Services and Forensic Pathology Services, are regularly working over 160 hours per month without receiving overtime payment as required by the *Basic Conditions of Employment Act* and GDOH Circular 5 of 2019. This non-compliance constitutes a violation of labour laws. Doctors, including Medical Officers and Specialists, are affected by mismanagement of commuted overtime contracts. In the Johannesburg Metro District, Doctors were coerced into signing limited three-month contracts owing to financial constraints. Family Physicians at facilities such as Tembisa Hospital are forced to perform duties beyond their scope, particularly in emergency units, an act that is regarded by the PSA as exploitation.

The freezing of posts has led to a critical shortage of healthcare staff across GDOH institutions. Despite denials by the Premier's Office regarding a moratorium on hiring, no effective measures have been implemented. This situation undermines public expectations tied to the Premier's "NASISPANI" employment initiative. Specialist Doctors in Family Medicine are reportedly facing bullying and harassment from their Head of Unit in Johannesburg. Despite this being reported in July 2023, the GDOH management has not addressed the misconduct. Intern Doctors in Sedibeng were stripped of their housing allowance and evicted from accommodation without union consultation or formal justification. The PSA's requests for documentation and meetings have been ignored.

The PSA has also raised alarm about senior positions being filled without following standard recruitment procedures. This has led to anonymous complaints and a Public Service Commission (PSC) report recommending the nullification of such appointments. The PSA calls for the MEC's consistent implementation of the PSC recommendations.

The Central Dispensing Unit (CDU) in Ekurhuleni was relocated to unsafe premises, violating occupational health and safety standards. Despite intervention by the Department of Employment and Labour and the South African Pharmacy Council, the CDU is still operational without addressing the issues. Employees continue to face daily safety risks without accountability from oversight bodies.

The PSA strongly condemns these persistent governance failures at the GDOH, citing exploitation, negligence, and mismanagement, which threaten employee welfare and patient care. The PSA will engage the MEC for Health and the Office of the Premier to reach an amicable solution to these issues.

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