

MEDIA RELEASE PSA concerned about power disconnection at Weskoppies Hospital, Pretoria

DATE 6 May 2025

EMBARGO None

ENQUIRIES communication@psa.co.za

The Public Servants Association (PSA) is extremely concerned about the recent power disconnection at Weskoppies Psychiatric Hospital in Pretoria, owing to unpaid municipal electricity bills.

This development highlights a disturbing failure of governance that compromises the delivery of critical healthcare services and the well-being of vulnerable patients. Weskoppies Hospital is a vital public mental health facility, providing specialised psychiatric care to some of the most vulnerable members of society. The ongoing electricity outage has brought essential operations to a standstill. Modern healthcare is reliant on uninterrupted power supply. Electricity powers life-saving equipment, enables communication systems, maintains therapeutic environments, and ensures the safety of patients and healthcare workers.

Psychiatric patients require a stable, secure, and calm environment to support their recovery. The power cut has disrupted this fragile balance, with severe consequences including, compromised patient safety as adequate lighting and failing security systems place patients at risk of injury or escape. Care is disrupted as medical equipment, including those needed for emergency interventions and monitoring, cannot function without power. There is increased mental health strain owing to anxiety, uncertainty, and discomfort caused by power outages, which can severely worsen psychiatric conditions. Healthcare workers face burnout as they are expected to provide critical care without the most basic resources, placing enormous psychological and physical strain on them, especially during night shifts.

The PSA calls for immediate and coordinated intervention to restore power to the Hospital without delay. Government and municipal authorities must urgently ensure that electricity is restored to Weskoppies to protect lives and prevent further deterioration in care. Government must secure an ongoing supply with a focus on long-term solutions to prevent recurrence, including proper budget allocation and administrative accountability. There must further be support for healthcare workers and patients. Additional resources and psychosocial support should be provided to mitigate the trauma caused by this crisis.

This is not merely a financial or administrative failure it is a public health emergency. The PSA urges authorities to act decisively and restore power to Weskoppies Hospital as every moment without electricity is a moment where patient lives and employee wellbeing are at risk.

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