



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**PSA concerned about safety of Department of Correctional Services employees in Western Cape**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA), representing thousands of correctional officers of the Department of Correctional Services, is extremely concerned about the safety of these employees following an outbreak of Diphtheria at Pollsmoor's Medium A Centre in the Western Cape.

Diphtheria is a highly contagious, infectious disease caused by *Corynebacterium diphtheriae*. It can lead to difficulty in breathing, increased heart rhythm, and may even result in death. According to information received by the PSA, Pollsmoor has recorded one death of an inmate, with many more being infected. It was also reported that at least ten Correctional Officers are awaiting test outcomes on possible infection.

The Department is responsible for ensuring a safe working environment and the PSA has urged the Department of Correctional Services to immediately take appropriate steps to prevent further spreading of this disease.

Enquiries have been made by the PSA to the Area Commissioner for Pollsmoor on what reasonable steps the Departments intends taking to ensure the safety of correctional officers. The PSA will closely monitor the situation whilst a response is being awaited.

END

