

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**COVID-19: PSA concerned about the safety of employees at Tygerberg Hospital**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is gravely concerned about the growing numbers of employees testing positive to COVID-19 at Tygerberg Hospital in Western Cape. This comes after a staff member in the kitchen services at the Hospital tested positive for the virus.

The PSA is appalled to learn that employees who were in direct contact with the affected person were told to continue working and just monitor their symptoms. The Union immediately brought it to the attention of Tygerberg Hospital Management that their behaviour and actions are inconsistent with the directives and guidelines on dealing with COVID-19 cases in the workplace.

Not adhering to the regulations can have severe implications as food and utensils could be contaminated and spread to patients and staff. These irresponsible actions are putting the staff and patients at a high and undue risk of infections. After the PSA's intervention, the staff were sent for testing and self-isolation and the kitchen was closed and decontaminated as per protocol.

More than 200 staff members at Tygerberg Hospital have been tested positive with for COVID-19. This is more than 5% of the staff complement at the hospital. This excludes the other institutions on the premises of the hospital such as Forensic Pathology Services, Emergency Medical Services, Dentistry and Laundry Services as they are not included in these figures. Furthermore, there have been 5 employees including nursing staff that have lost their lives at the hospital due to the virus.

Tygerberg hospital has been in the media spotlight because of the deaths and the continuous increasing numbers. Therefore, its reckless to wait until staff become critical patients or die before the Hospital Management intervenes

The PSA will continue to monitor the situation and intervene where necessary to ensure that measures are implemented to maximise the protection of staff at the workplace.

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