

MEDIA RELEASE

PSA shocked by conditions at Davhana Clinic in Limpopo

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) has condemned the dismal health and safety conditions of employees and patients at the Limpopo Department of Health's Davhana Clinic are exposed to. The Clinic which renders 24-hour services, has no running water.

The Clinic only source of water is by means of buckets that are filled at municipal tanks. At times, the tanks were not filled for two weeks, despite the clinic having notified the municipality that the tanks were empty. The only borehole at the Clinic has dried up. This situation exposes employees and patients to unhygienic conditions as they are unable to wash their hands as frequently as required by medical standards.

The baby weighing scale has not been working for some time, despite baby weight being a vital part of health records and guiding intervention. The Clinic's management has not taken any steps to address this. New-born babies, parents and employees are susceptible to infections owing to the unhygienic and unsafe conditions at the Clinic.

The PSA raised this looming tragedy with the Department of Health, but this rendered no results. The PSA subsequently engaged the Department of Labour to inspect the facility as a matter of urgency. An Inspector of the Department of Labour visited the Clinic on 5 March 2020. It was then further discovered that employees did not have proper and functional toilets, fire extinguishers have not been serviced since September 2019, and the area between the Clinic and the residence is not maintained, posing a danger of snakes and scorpions.

The Labour Inspector issued a *Contravention of Occupational Health and Safety Act* notice to the employer. The PSA is, however, concerned that despite this notice, services continue at the Clinic with all the associated risks for employees and patients, including new-born infants. The PSA therefore called upon the MEC of Health to resolve the appalling conditions within 24-hours to ensure the community continues to receive uninterrupted services from the Clinic and that employees' and patients' health and safety are observed.

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