

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA supports unemployed doctors in KwaZulu-Natal and demands immediate action by Minister of Health
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) supports the just and urgent struggle of over 150 unemployed Doctors who remain unplaced by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health.

These Doctors have completed their internship and community service obligations in line with public health policy but have been abandoned by the same government that trained them. The PSA demands that Minister of Health, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, must immediately confirm how many of the 1 500 posts he promised on 10 April 2025 have been allocated to KwaZulu-Natal. In addition, budget allocations must be urgently released to allow the Provincial Department to advertise and fill these critical posts without delay.

This delay is a denial of justice, a betrayal of the working class, and a blatant undermining of the right to health for the people of KwaZulu-Natal. The PSA is witnessing the absurd reality where qualified, unemployed Doctors are forced to protest outside the Office of the Premier, whilst patients across the province die in overcrowded hospitals and clinics owing to staff shortages. The situation reflects a lack of political will and systemic dysfunction.

KwaZulu-Natal, with a population exceeding 12 million people, currently operates at a doctor-to-patient ratio of 0.4 per 1 000, which is far below acceptable standards. In rural and township hospitals, the situation is dire. Emergency units are short-staffed, surgical backlogs are growing, and burnout amongst medical personnel has reached a breaking point. And yet, over 150 doctors remain jobless, reflecting poor governance and a leadership crisis.

The PSA therefore demands a written and public confirmation by the Minister, indicating how many of the 1 500 promised posts are designated for KwaZulu-Natal, broken down by facility and position type. The Department of Health must release funds to the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Department to advertise and fill these positions urgently. These are not new posts but critical vacancies that have been left unfilled to the detriment of employees and patients. The Department must fast-track the placement process to absorb these 150 unemployed doctors into facilities most in need, especially in rural, peri-urban, and under-resourced areas.

The PSA further calls for a joint meeting between national and provincial health authorities, unions, and community organisations to develop a radical and people-centred workforce plan, rooted in updated organograms, real population needs, and full transparency on staffing allocations.

These unemployed doctors are not job seekers begging for work. They are professionals demanding the fulfilment of a promise, and the right to serve communities. Government cannot continue to pay lip service to health transformation whilst it leaves hospitals short of hands and graduates unemployed.

Healthcare is not a commodity - it is a human right. Doctors are not surplus - they are essential. A people's government must plan and place its human resources efficiently and ethically. The time for bureaucratic excuses has passed. The PSA will intensify mobilisation alongside unemployed Doctors and progressive forces until every qualified Doctor is placed, every funded post is filled, and every patient is treated with dignity.

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