

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA welcomes advertising of 523 nursing positions by Limpopo Department of Health
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) commends the Limpopo Department of Health for finally heeding the Union's call made to fill vacant positions.

The Department has advertised 523 nursing positions, which is a progressive and partial step bearing in mind that the Department has a total of 1817 vacancies. The non-filling of positions not only affected service delivery, but also caused stagnation in the careers of employees, hopeful to better their lives, as prospects of upward mobility were thwarted by the silent moratorium. In addition, the situation took a toll on employees' health as they had to double efforts to cover the tasks associated with vacancies. The burden increased further when the Department pushed for 24-hour services at many clinics without the necessary and adequate human resources.

Communities are constantly attacking these employees, accusing them of laziness and not being committed to their job, without understanding the impact of government's failure to ensure adequate staff at almost all departments. Access to health services remains a critical need for the most vulnerable members of society who depend on public health institutions as they cannot afford private medical institutions and practitioners. Elderly citizens often spend an entire day at local clinics for examination and chronic medication.

The Limpopo Department of Health has led the way in addressing service delivery and it is trusted that other departments will take similar steps. The Limpopo Department of Education, for example, has 9 850 vacancies. If the Province is not prepared to fill these vacancies, service delivery will remain a dream and government will continue failing the people of Limpopo who depend on these services as part of their fundamental rights. Failure to provide these services is tantamount to denying people of their rights and is contrary to the provisions of the South African Constitution.

The PSA again urges the Limpopo Premier to intervene and ensure that the 13 800 vacancies in Limpopo are filled. The Province is not able to ensure excellent service delivery to citizens without adequate employees. Provinces such as Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal embarked on mass employment, which is especially appropriate given high unemployment figures, especially amongst young people. By not addressing the more than 100 000 vacancies nationwide, government is setting a poor example for the private sector by sending a message service delivery and unemployment are not regarded as problems.

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