

MEDIA RELEASE PSA welcomes appointments in Northern Cape Department of Health

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) welcomes recent departmental appointments announced by the Northern Cape Premier.

The PSA congratulates the MEC for Health, Ms Nontobeko Vilakazi, and the acting Head of Department (HOD), Mr Oupa Phiri, on their leadership responsibilities at a critical moment for public healthcare in the Northern Cape. The PSA further notes and appreciates the engagement between MEC Vilakazi, the acting HOD, and the Executive Leadership of the Department of Health, followed by the MEC's address to all provincial health staff. The message of unity, discipline, and mutual respect speaks directly to the realities faced by health workers on the ground. A stable, respectful working environment strengthens service delivery. The call for unity aligns with the lived experience of health workers who continue to serve communities under severe strain.

The PSA urges the new leadership to prioritise the wellbeing of health workers as an immediate operational focus, with the filling of critical vacant posts needing urgent attention. The appointment of doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and allied health professionals, strengthening of administrative support staff capacity and expansion of ambulance services across rural and remote areas should be prioritised. Chronic staff shortages place unbearable pressure on existing employees. This results in burnout, extended waiting times, and compromised patient outcomes. Addressing vacancies improves quality of care and restores dignity to the workforce. Additionally, transparent recruitment processes, accelerated appointment timelines, budget alignment with service delivery demands and ongoing engagement with organised labour are necessary.

Communities in the Northern Cape rely on a functional public health system and health workers remain at the centre of this system. Leadership must match words with decisive action. The PSA is ready to engage constructively with the MEC and the Department to support a united, ethical, and service driven health sector in the Northern Cape.

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