**MEDIA RELEASE** **PSA welcomes closure of Seshego Pharmaceutical Depot in Limpopo**

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EMBARGO None

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) welcomes the closure of Seshego Pharmaceutical Depot in Limpopo by an inspector of the Department of Employment and Labour.

The closure comes after a long battle with the Department of Health as employees were subjected to and unsafe and unconducive work environment, which was in contravention of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. Employees were accommodated in a dilapidated building, with a leaking roof, falling ceiling, naked electrical wires and dysfunctional toilets.

The PSA raised the matter of employees' safety which led to a visit by an inspector in February 2020. Although the PSA had hoped for a Prohibition Notice, considering the state of the building, the inspector issued a Contravention Notice, giving the Department of Health 60 days to address the challenges.

The Department, however, failed to address the problems until it rained on 1 October 2020, resulting in damage to medication costing millions of rands. The PSA always questioned the storing of such medication in a dilapidated building with a leaking roof. The Department was fully aware of the state of the building and the risks associated with the keeping the medication and employees working there but failed to prevent this enormous loss.

Despite it being too late, the inspector finally issued a Prohibition Notice on 2 October 2020 whereby no one is permitted to use the building until the roof is fixed, all electrical wiring is tested, and a certificate of compliance is issued by a competent and certified person.

The PSA welcomes the closure of the building although it came with a huge cost that could have been avoided had the Department attended to the issues raised by the PSA on numerous occasions. Once again, taxpayers' money was wasted in the hands of those entrusted with state resources. The PSA is dismayed by the fact that no one will be held accountable and patients will not get their medication.

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