

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**PSA welcomes SANC's Wall of Remembrance for COVID-19 nurses  
and calls on Minister of Health to follow suit**

DATE 5 May 2023

EMBARGO None

ENQUIRIES [communication@psa.co.za](mailto:communication@psa.co.za)

---

The Public Servants Association (PSA) welcomes the decision by the South African Nursing Council (SANC) to erect a Wall of Remembrance in honour of nurses who passed away during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nurses were part of the first line of defence when the country was besieged by the pandemic and this noble act by the SANC ensures that fallen nurses will not be forgotten. From 2020 until April 2021, 6 000 health workers were hospitalised and more than 1 300 lost their lives as a result of COVID-19. The nurses who survived the pandemic were left with emotional scars as they suffered during strains of the pandemic period. They had to continue with their duties, often without personal protective equipment and, true to their oath, they put their lives on the line to save many other lives.

The PSA participated in the unveiling of the Wall of Remembrance and whilst appreciating the nobility of the idea, believes that government, through the Department of Health, could have done something to honour both deceased and surviving employees. Surviving nurses did not enjoy any reward of material value from government, other than empty words. Government has demonstrated to nurses that it is an uncaring employer who failed to provide any form of recognition or token to nurses who are still suffering from the traumatic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

With Nurses' Day being commemorated on 12 May 2023, the PSA calls on the Minister of Health to take a cue from the SANC and acknowledge and reward nurses who gave their best during the pandemic.

END

