

FOR PSA MEMBERS: DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH EC

08-06-2020

## Idutywa CHC: temporary closure of the pharmacy

The PSA visited the Idutywa Clinic on 5 June 2020 and was welcomed by news of an employee, at the Pharmacy who tested positive, whose results were known on the same day of the PSA's visit. This happened after a nurse from another clinic visited the pharmacy in the preceding week and later found that she confirmed positive to coronavirus. The employees at the pharmacy requested that they be tested and placed on quarantine, whilst awaiting the results for fear of contracting the virus. Unfortunately, their request to quarantine was not acceded to as they were not the 'close contacts' to the positive employee. The PSA immediately demanded the temporary closure of the pharmacy to allow decontamination; testing of employees, and placing the affected personnel on self-isolation for at least 14 days and this was acceded to.

The PSA condemns the attitude of the Idutywa CHC Management, which regrettably worsened the situation for other employees at the clinic and led to pharmacy employee testing positive. The National Department of Health defines close contact as ***a person having had face-to-face contact (≤1 metre) or having been in a closed space with a confirmed COVID-19 case for at least 15 minutes***'. The PSA educated the employer on the definition of 'close contact' and hopes that this tragic incident will not be repeated because of the employer's attitude.

Members are urged to ensure extra caution when reporting for work and executing their duties to protect themselves against the virus. Observe social distancing, always put masks on, and regularly wash hands with soap or sanitiser. The PSA upholds that safety of employees is non-negotiable and members should remember that it is illegal for the employer to force them to work in an unsafe working environment, hence they are encouraged to report non-compliance with COVID-19 regulations to their shop stewards, contact the office on (047)501 2500 or email [zoleka.ngebe@psa.co.za](mailto:zoleka.ngebe@psa.co.za).

GENERAL MANAGER