

FOR PSA MEMBERS: LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

02-06-2020

COVID-19: Temporary closure and cleaning at Van Velden Hospital

The PSA was made aware that an employee tested positive for COVID-19 at Van Velden Hospital, Tzaneen who was working at the maternity ward. The PSA immediately contacted the employer who confirmed that indeed the hospital was informed of the results on Sunday, 31st May 2020 and made members aware of the matter on Monday, 1st June. The PSA was however concerned about the non-disclosure of the hospital management as well as testing of other employees who were in contact with the employee who tested positive for the virus as well as starting the process of contact tracing. The employer responded indicating that the maternity ward was closed for deep cleaning on the 2nd of June 2020 and further that other employees were tested and results are awaited and during which the process of contact tracing also started.

The PSA welcomed the prompt action by the employer of testing employees, disinfection of the hospital as well as adhering to the screening of all employees as well as supply of necessary PPE, but is still worried about the counseling of members as well as staff who continue to report for duty whilst waiting for the results. DPSA Circular 7 of 2020 direct that where an employee tested positive for Covid-19, the HOD must grant such an employee sick leave, grant approval in accordance with Public Service Regulation 51 for all employees who worked closely with the affected employee to be self-quarantined for a period of 14 days to ensure the infection does not spread, facilitate the disinfection of the affected workplaces and report the case to the DPSA. The employer was directed to speed up the process of isolating other employees to prevent more infections in the Hospital.

Members should note 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 Shopstewards, contact the office on 015 295 0500 or email patricia.matlhadisa@psa.co.za.

GENERAL MANAGER