

Feedback: COVID-19 Provincial Steering Committee meeting

A virtual meeting took place on 4 February 2021 and the following issues were discussed:

PPE availability and stock levels

Although labour raised concerns regarding the inadequacy of PPE, the employer reported that there is adequate PPE and the facility management must continue to ensure maintenance of stock levels. It was also established that OHS/COVID-19 meetings are not happening at institutional level, which cause the Provincial Committee to deal with issues that should have been raised at institutional level. The employer was urged to ensure that such meetings take place at District, Hospital, and PHC levels for easier management and monitoring of COVID-19 compliance. Shop stewards must monitor provision of adequate and appropriate PPE at institutions.

Bed capacity in hospitals

The daily report is shared amongst facilities to enable them to facilitate the transfer of patients if necessary. The employer, however, reported that the numbers demonstrated that the peak has been passed as there is a decline in bed utilisation. Although the bed occupancy rate has decreased, there will be constant monitoring to ensure proper management of COVID-19 in facilities.

Departmental Circular 3 of 2021

Upon issuing of the Circular, labour raised concerns that led to the meeting to discuss the implementation of the Circular against DPSA Circular 1 of 2021. Subsequently the employer developed and presented a framework with various options that will assist managers to implement the Circular and reported that the memo is awaiting the HOD's signature. The memo (*attached*) was signed and issued on 5 February 2021. The employer also issued the Remote Working Contractual Agreement to be entered into with employees in compliance with the DPSA Circular. Members are advised that no managers must impose any option on them, there must be discussions and consultations in terms of preferred options. Members can follow grievance procedure if unhappy with the consultation process.

GENERAL MANAGER