

FOR PSA MEMBERS: **NORTH-WEST PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
SECTORAL BARGAINING COUNCIL (PHSDSBC)**

26-05-2023

Feedback: North-West PHSDSBC Chamber meeting – 18 May 2023

Policies

The employer consulted on numerous policies, including Education, Training and Development, (Social Development); Governance Structure (Social Development); Remote and Home Working Policy (Social Development); Wellness (Social Development); Head Office Parking (Health); Personnel Security (Health); Sexual Harassment (Health); Patient Transfer and Escorting of Patients (Health). After engagements, amendments and corrections were made to the Education, Training and Development as well as the Wellness Policy. Other policies were withdrawn for further handling and to be resubmitted.

Psychological support for workers

The Department of Health reported that it has 35 health professionals dedicated to the wellness of employees, including Social Workers, Psychologists, and registered Counsellors. However, it was identified that there is a need for more Social Workers in districts and hospitals. Labour accepted the report and demanded that the Department looks at the revised structure as a matter of urgency and makes sure that the structure is aligned to employees' needs. The Department of Social Development reported that it has one practitioner to serve 2 500 employees. Labour described the situation as embarrassing in that it leaves employees vulnerable to psychosocial ailments that come with their occupation. The Department emphasised that a contract was advertised for a service provider to be appointed, however, labour re-iterated that it is not enough and a structure should be developed to address the problem. The employer noted the comments and will report back on the next Chamber.

2021/2022-pay progression

The Department of Health managed to finalise pay progression for 5 461 OSD employees and only 3 363 employees were paid on 27 March 2023. It was reported that an error was identified and re-verification performed for the remaining employees who have not been paid. Although a total of 1 395 employees was approved, payment is still to be made. A total of 17 307 non-OSD employees were moderated and pay progression was paid in February 2023. Labour raised concern about the fact that 5 463 employees were not moderated, and a detailed report will be provided. In respect of the Department of Social Development, 642 employees were paid in December 2022 and only one employee underperformed and was referred to performance interventions.

Updates on Boikagong

The district held a consultative session with labour on temporarily turning Boikagong into a community-based child and youth care program. As per the previous Chamber resolution, the consultation was done at local level, but owing to the impasse between labour and the employer it was agreed that the matter be escalated back to the Chamber for consultations.

Social Development

The Chamber noted problems of operations continuing at the Department of Social Development, especially an impasse between the HOD and MEC, which is affecting Chamber business as certain reports could not be tabled as different names for people who must represent the employer are submitted, creating confusion regarding the correct representative of the employer. The Chamber resolved that a letter be written to the MEC for an urgent meeting with the Chamber.

GENERAL MANAGER