



FOR PSA MEMBERS: **GENERAL 4/2025**

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## International Nurses' Day 2025: Paying tributes alone is not enough

The PSA pays tribute to the dedication, compassion, and expertise of nurses across South Africa as the world marks International Nurses' Day on 12 May 2025. These frontline professionals are the cornerstone of the healthcare system, caring for patients in hospitals, clinics, homes, and crisis zones, often under immense pressure and in unsafe environments.

Despite their indispensable role, nurses continue to face a multitude of systemic challenges. Chronic understaffing forces nurses to work long, irregular hours, leading to mental and physical exhaustion, which may compromise patient care. Poor infrastructure, limited resources, and unsafe environments are a reality in many healthcare facilities. The closure of nursing colleges, lack of training and development opportunities, and stagnant career progression further exacerbate these challenges, contributing to a steady exodus of skilled nurses to countries offering better conditions and prospects.

The PSA has consistently raised these concerns and advocated for comprehensive reform and sustained investment in the public healthcare sector. The PSA demands immediate audits and upgrades of deteriorating infrastructure in public health facilities. The PSA continues to campaign for the implementation of enhanced safety policies to protect nurses from workplace violence and abuse, improved staffing levels to alleviate excessive workloads, and fair remuneration. Equally important is the provision of mental health support to support nurses in coping with the emotional stress of their work.

Recognition of nurses alone is not enough. The PSA urges government and health authorities to implement decisive policy interventions that restore dignity to the nursing profession and empower nurses. Nurses' Day must be a celebration and renewed commitment to protecting these workers who safeguard the nation's health.

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