



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

27-11-2025

Permanent appointment of Community Health Workers (CHWs)

Members will recall that the matter of permanent appointments of CHWs has long been on the agenda of the Council where unions pushed for recurring fixed-term contracts whilst the matter was under discussion. The approach was to secure the employment of CHWs. These extensions secured employment for CHWs whilst the battle for their permanent employment ensued. Subsequently, the Council was advised that the matter was taken to court by one of the recognised unions, and of the outcome, although that did not take away the right of other unions to continue pursuit of the matter for their members and for it to be discussed.

In the meeting in September, the employer reported that engagements were underway with the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) regarding permanent appointment of CHWs. Subsequently, organised labour demanded that there must be meaningful consultation to ensure that the rights and interests of these employees are advanced.

Whilst labour waited for the report in the scheduled meeting of 9 December 2025, the PSA was alerted regarding processes away from the Council. Firstly, the employer embarked on a verification process for CHWs with Grade 12, something strange to unions as the matter was never discussed at the level of Council. The PSA can only speculate and suspect that the employer is intending to exclude those without Grade 12 in the permanent appointment, which the PSA will not support. The PSA wants all CHWs to be taken care of.

Further, the PSA has noted the employer's intention to permanently appoint 27 000 CHWs on salary level 2 and concluded an agreement outside Council, which is concerning and creating an extremely dangerous precedent. The PSA and other unions would have thought the criteria for permanent appointment would be negotiated to ensure fairness instead of unilateral implementation of CHWs' permanent appointment. This approach is unjust, discriminatory, and undermines years of dedicated service rendered by thousands of CHWs who have been at the core of South Africa's primary healthcare system.

Whilst the permanent appointment of CHWs is a victory to this category of employees who have suffered at the hand of an uncaring employer, it is important that this is implemented fairly and justly. There must be consulted criteria, including assisting with the implementation of Recognition of Prior Learning where necessary, consideration of years of experience, ensuring equal pay for equal work, and upskilling of employees where necessary.

Subsequently, labour requested a special Council Meeting to address this matter. The employer responded that it will only be available for such a meeting on 9 December 2025. Members will be updated on developments.

Employees who want to join the PSA can visit the PSA's website or contact PSA Provincial Offices.

Reuben Maleka
GENERAL MANAGER