

<b>MEDIA RELEASE</b>	PSA acknowledges bold steps to upgrade and restructure Eastern Cape Department Health facilities
<b>DATE</b>	04 March 2025
<b>EMBARGO</b>	None
<b>ENQUIRIES</b>	communication@psa.co.za

---

The Public Servants Association (PSA) acknowledges the bold steps announced by MEC Ntandokazi Capa regarding the Eastern Cape Department of Health's plan to upgrade and restructure health facilities in the province.

The PSA understands that the goal of improving health care services, especially in remote and underprivileged areas, is a commendable effort aimed at better meeting the evolving medical needs of the population. The PSA, however, stresses the importance of ensuring that these changes are implemented with due consideration for the province's healthcare workforce and communities that depend on these vital services.

The MEC emphasised the need for a more efficient and streamlined approach, citing resource constraints and the need to provide services for an aging population as well as addressing the growing burden of non-communicable diseases and trauma-related injuries. Whilst this is an important shift, the PSA urges the Department to balance efficiency with equity, ensuring that the most vulnerable communities are not disadvantaged in the process. As the MEC pointed out, the proposed changes will not be a "one-size-fits-all" approach. The PSA echoes this sentiment and believes that tailored solutions must be developed through comprehensive and meaningful consultations with all relevant stakeholders, including healthcare workers, unions, and local communities. The PSA strongly advocates for a transparent and inclusive process where all voices are heard, and their concerns are properly addressed.

The PSA further calls for clarity on the implementation timeline of these changes. The MEC indicated that the consultation process may take up to five years. Whilst the PSA understands the need for thorough consultation, the Union urges the Department to ensure that this process does not unnecessarily delay much-needed improvements in healthcare delivery. The PSA is committed to working with the Eastern Cape Department of Health to ensure that the necessary upgrades to the health system are conducted in a way that prioritises patient care and the rights and well-being of health workers. The PSA is particularly concerned about possible implications for staffing, job security, and working conditions. It is critical that all health workers are properly supported and adequately resourced as these changes unfold.

The PSA, whilst fully in support of the vision of better healthcare access for all, urges the Department to work transparently and collaboratively to ensure that changes are effectively communicated, and that no community or employee is left behind.

END