

MEDIA RELEASE **PSA commemorates World Radiography Day amidst challenges in health sector**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) honours Radiographers on the commemoration of World Radiography Day.

Radiography plays crucial role in the health system, serving as cornerstone for effective diagnosis and treatment. Whilst Radiographers are not as well recognised as doctors and nurses, they play crucial role in providing essential diagnostic tools from fractures to serious diseases, and support healthcare professionals by acting as the “eyes of medicine”, thus assisting doctors in making informed decisions on patient care.

Radiography encompasses various modalities, including X-rays, CT scans, MRI, and ultrasound. This diversity allows for comprehensive imaging services across different healthcare settings, from primary care clinics to specialised hospitals, ensuring that patients receive appropriate care. Despite its importance, the radiography profession in South Africa faces challenges, including staffing shortages, resource limitations, and the need for better public awareness of the role of radiographers. Addressing these issues is crucial for enhancing the effectiveness of radiography services. In many hospitals, radiographers find themselves provided with outdated equipment and insufficient resources, which is frustrating and hindering the quality of services.

There is a significant shortage of qualified radiographers in the country where the ratio is astronomically higher at 1.2 per 100 000 people whilst many developing countries are at 1 radiographer per 10 000 population. This shortage places immense pressure on existing staff, leading to burnout and impacting on the quality of care provided. There is also inadequate continuous professional development for radiographers, noting the rapid technological advancements. Radiographers in public services are lagging behind their counterparts in the private sector.

On World Radiography Day, the PSA calls on the Department of Health to allocate funds to upgrade imaging equipment and facilities to enhance service delivery, to support ongoing training interventions, and ensure that radiographers are working in safe environment with adequate support and resources. The PSA recognises the dedication of radiographers and their commitment to patient care as well as their crucial role in the health system.

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