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| MEDIA RELEASE | PSA concerned about Mpumalanga Department of Health's continuous failure to ensure consistent water supply in hospitals |
| DATE | 28 February 2025 |
| EMBARGO | None |
| ENQUIRIES | communication@psa.co.za |

The Public Servants Association (PSA) is extremely concerned about the Mpumalanga Department of Health's ongoing failure to provide a consistent and adequate water supply to hospitals in the province.

Rob Ferreira Hospital, a major tertiary hospital, has for example, been experiencing a severe water shortage since 21 February 2025 owing to a burst main pipe on the Hospital premises. This crisis has severely disrupted healthcare services, placing immense strain on employees, patients, and the community. Despite the urgency of the situation, the Department's top management has failed to address the issue promptly.

The Hospital has been operating without a permanent CEO since the previous CEO was removed following pressure from an organised labour group. The PSA intervened and declared a dispute regarding the employer's unfair implementation of ambiguous demands. Whilst an agreement was eventually reached regarding the CEO's placement, the lack of stable leadership has left the Hospital vulnerable to operational failures, such as the undetected water leakage, which has resulted in millions of rands in unnecessary costs for the Department in just one month.

The failure to provide a basic necessity such as water is a gross violation of human rights. A stable water supply is critical for infection control and essential healthcare practices. Without it, hospitals are breeding grounds for infections, endangering patients and healthcare workers.

The PSA engaged with the District Manager on this matter, urging immediate intervention. Following the PSA's intervention and expression of dissatisfaction, water was eventually restored. This is, however, not an isolated incident, as recurring water shortages in health facilities across the province remain a persistent crisis. The PSA will continue to engage with the Provincial Health Department to demand sustainable solutions that ensure all hospitals and healthcare facilities have uninterrupted access to water. The PSA will not tolerate negligence that puts the lives of healthcare workers and patients at risk.

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