

MEDIA RELEASE: PSA demands urgent investigation into the suspicious death of Medical Manager Dr. F. Idika and his persecution at Vryheid Hospital in KwaZulu-Natal

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EMBARGO: None

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With profound sorrow and a deep sense of injustice, the Public Servants Association (PSA) mourns the untimely passing of Dr. Francis Idika, who was a Deputy Director and a Medical Manager at Vryheid Hospital in the Zululand District, a highly esteemed hospital EXCO member and a stalwart advocate for quality healthcare. Dr. Idika dedicated his life to serving the Vryheid Hospital community, demonstrating unwavering commitment to his profession and the well-being of his patients. His passing is a devastating loss, not only to his family and colleagues but to the healthcare sector as a whole.

The PSA extends heartfelt condolences to his family, relatives, comrades, and friends during this period of immense grief. However, it is with grave concern that the PSA acknowledges the glaring absence of an official report detailing the cause of his death. The PSA is aware of a well-documented history of bullying, intimidation, and relentless persecution suffered by Dr Francis Idika at Vryheid Hospital in KwaZulu-Natal at the hands of oppressive management. Dr Idika was thrown out from government Mimosas Flats by the Acting CEO alleging that he had overstayed the time that he is allowed to stay in the residence, while his position allows him to stay at government residence without a timeframe. This treatment caused depression since he was homeless and, at times, slept in his car while he was looking for accommodation. The PSA demands a full, transparent, and independent investigation into the circumstances surrounding his tragic demise. The silence surrounding this matter is unacceptable, and the PSA will not allow it to be swept under the rug.

Dr. F. Idika himself had been subjected to relentless victimisation, wrongful disciplinary charges, and sustained abuse at the hands of certain managers at Vryheid Hospital for years. He was demoted twice when the PSA assisted Dr Idika in challenging the frivolous charges that were levelled against him since 2019. Dr Idika was, since 2019, each year subjected to disciplinary charges against him where the PSA assisted him by protecting his rights until this questionable death occurred. He endured unjust persecution simply for upholding ethical medical practices and standing in defence of his colleagues and patients. The PSA finds it deeply disturbing that a professional so dedicated to the public good was repeatedly targeted by those in power, ultimately leading to this tragic outcome.

The PSA urges all members to exercise sensitivity while awaiting an official statement from his family and the relevant authorities. The PSA will communicate details of his memorial service and funeral arrangements in due course. Reports from distressed employees at Vryheid Hospital in KwaZulu-Natal expose a disturbing pattern of targeted harassment, malicious disciplinary proceedings, and psychological warfare aimed at breaking the spirit of those who dare to challenge corruption and mismanagement.

This abuse of power has cultivated a work environment that is both toxic and unsustainable, posing a direct threat to service delivery and, ultimately, to the health and safety of patients.

The PSA will no longer tolerate these atrocities and demands immediate, decisive action:

- **Independent Investigation by SAPS to investigate the death of Dr Idika** – The PSA calls on the Department of Health KZN for an urgent, high-level internal investigation into the victimisation, coercion, and untimely deaths of the Vryheid Medical Manager suspected to be linked to workplace abuse. The Health Department of KZN must leave no stone unturned in uncovering the full extent of his death.
- **Public Service Commission (PSC) inquiry** – The PSC must initiate a forensic investigation into the systemic failures that have allowed bullying and managerial tyranny to thrive unchecked. This inquiry must expose those responsible for perpetuating and enabling these despicable practices.
- **Swift and Severe disciplinary action against the perpetrators** – The PSA demands the immediate suspension of all senior officials found to have engaged in or facilitated bullying, harassment, and victimisation of Dr Idika. No official implicated in these transgressions should be shielded from the full weight of justice.

The PSA calls upon the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health, law enforcement agencies, and relevant government bodies to heed this call to action. The culture of fear, corruption, and abuse must be dismantled, and those responsible must be held accountable.

If the authorities fail to act, the PSA will mobilise its members, healthcare workers, and the broader labour movement to take drastic action, including mass protests and legal intervention, to ensure justice is served. The PSA refuses to stand by while those who dedicate their lives to saving others are left to suffer in silence. The PSA will not be silenced, and will fight relentlessly until justice prevails for Dr Idika's Family and colleagues. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

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