

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA welcomes launch of orthotics and prosthetics facility at Ngwelezane Tertiary Hospital in KwaZulu-Natal
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EMBARGO	None
ENQUIRIES	communication@psa.co.za

The Public Servants Association (PSA) welcomes updates regarding the construction of the new orthotics and prosthetics facility at Ngwelezane Tertiary Hospital in KwaZulu-Natal as announced during a recent oversight visit by the Health MEC.

This critical healthcare investment will impact hundreds of patients across the King Cetshwayo, Umkhanyakude, and Zululand districts, bringing essential services closer to communities that have long been underserved. The PSA recognises the significance of this facility in transforming healthcare for vulnerable patients who have been left at the mercy of a centralised healthcare system. Currently, patients in desperate need of prosthetics endure financial strain and physical hardship to travel to distant cities such as Durban and Newcastle to access services. For rural and impoverished patients, this has meant debilitating delays in care, deteriorating quality of life, and economic exclusion. This new facility will bring care closer to home and reduce financial burdens on patients and their families.

The PSA also acknowledges the ripple effect that this facility will have in easing the burden on overwhelmed institutions, including Wentworth Hospital in eThekweni. Decentralising orthotics and prosthetics services will enhance patient care in the region and improve the efficiency of other healthcare centres. Wentworth Hospital has struggled with an overwhelming demand for prosthetic services. The construction of this new facility will ensure that resources are more evenly distributed, benefiting all patients in KwaZulu-Natal.

Whilst the PSA welcomes this initiative, the Union expects the Department of Health to meet its 24-month deadline with no delays or excuses. Too often, essential projects are derailed by mismanagement, lack of oversight, and bureaucratic inefficiency. This facility cannot be allowed to join the list of delayed or abandoned infrastructure projects. The PSA demands transparency from the Department of Health, including regular progress reports, clear timelines, and public accountability on every aspect of this project. The PSA further emphasises the importance of ensuring that once completed, this facility will be a fully operational, fully staffed, and fully equipped centre of excellence. Without adequately trained professionals, state-of-the-art equipment, and sufficient funding, this facility will be an empty promise. The PSA urges the Department to begin recruiting and training specialised healthcare professionals now to ensure that the facility can at opening immediately begin delivering services.

The PSA congratulates the MEC for visionary leadership in this bold healthcare initiative. This investment is a significant milestone for the decentralisation of healthcare in KwaZulu-Natal with long-term benefits. The PSA will remain vigilant to ensure that this facility is fully operational and delivering on its promises. The PSA will continue to hold government accountable at every step of this project and beyond.

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