

## Feedback: Multilateral meeting with Head of Health (KZN) - 14 February 2021

The following items were discussed:

### **Resurgence plan: COVID-19**

The Department is preparing for the third wave and will circulate the plan when concluded. Labour requested details on the plan on the Department's readiness for the third wave. The report is expected at the next meeting.

### **Staff establishments in all healthcare institutions/organisational structure/filling of vacant posts**

The PSA requested details of the reviewed (updated) and approved organograms for all KZN Health institutions. Organised labour requested for the implementation reports for those organizational structures that have been approved. The Department is engaging with National Treasury to fill posts where employees had passed away owing to COVID-19. Authority is awaited. Labour registered concerns on the failure of the human resource department to fill budgeted positions and putting members under pressure owing to understaffing and requested employer to speed up the process of filling positions.

### **COVID-19 leave vs normal sick leave**

The employer reported that special leave is applicable for employees in quarantine. Once confirmed positive, normal sick leave will apply to those who tested negative. If there is a claim accepted by the Compensation Fund, the sick leave will then be credited to the employees. Labour raised concerns on the inconsistency with regards to granting sick or special leave to members who are in isolation owing to contact with positive person with symptoms of COVID-19 or 501-Y-V2. The employer promised to attend to these concerns and report back at the next meeting.

### **Shortage of N95 masks**

The Department clarified that the FF2P masks are equivalent to N95 masks and it is sourcing these locally for staff working in COVID-19 wards. Labour raised concerns on the shortage of N95 masks and the quality of these masks at Chief Inkosi Albert Luthuli, Vryheid Hospital and other institutions. The employer indicated that some doctors bought their own N95 masks and no law prevents them from

purchasing these masks. Labour raised concerns on the failure of department to ensure that all masks distributed are of quality and standard as prescribed by the WHO and the National Department Health.

### **Mental health wellness**

The employer circulated a Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Response Plan. This initiative has not been implemented in institutions and OHS structures need to be revived. Labour appealed to the employer to share information and contact details on the psychological support for employees to get support.

### **Shortage of oxygen in facilities**

The HOD reported that the Department is relatively comfortable with the supply/availability of oxygen in health facilities as demand has gone down. Labour appealed to the employer to increase the supply of oxygen to save lives.

### **Report: Addington lifts**

The HOD reported that an average of five lifts are currently working. The two lifts to be replaced have been ordered from outside the country and no commitment can be given on date of finalisation. A task team meeting is scheduled for 19 February 2021. Labour appealed to the Department to increase the capacity of oxygen in preparation for the third waves and ensure that non-availability is address as matter of urgency.

### **Opening of Dr Pixley Ka Isaka Seme Memorial Hospital**

The HOD reported that the infrastructure was 99% complete but owing to some challenges and could not indicate when the Hospital will be commissioned and opened. The PSA requested that the HR plan be provided. The PSA raised concerns about the delays in opening the Hospital without management consequences. As per member mandate, it was communicated to the HOD that our expectations are that the Hospital must be opened to ease pressure on surrounding facilities. It was further noted that the MEC has indicated that the Hospital will open by the end of March 2021.

### **Sessional Specialists at King Dinizulu, Oral and Dental**

The PSA reported that sessional appointments had been terminated as a result of restructuring and no consultation had taken place. This has severely compromised service delivery and there is a shortage of expertise at the Oral and Dental Training Hospital. The HOD will investigate.

Members will be informed of developments.

GENERAL MANAGER