

## Feedback: Gauteng Department of Health (GDoH) Provincial Multilateral Forum

### Issues: Community Health Workers (CHWs)

At the Gauteng PHSDSBC Chamber, the PSA introduced the agenda item relating to unfair working conditions of CHWs. The PSA pursued this agenda item, even though no other unions showed an interest in the matter. During a Multilateral Forum meeting on 26 July 2024, the matter of CHWs was the only matter that was discussed at length. The other agenda items were deferred to a special Multilateral Forum meeting. The issues discussed affecting CHWs were as follows:

#### **Insufficient supply of tools of trade**

The PSA argued the issue of non-provision of uniform or protective clothing. It was agreed that the GDOH did not supply uniform and protective clothing for most CHWs during the 2024/25-financial year. The GDOH undertook to make uniform and protective clothing available to all CHWs within three months. The PSA will monitor the provision of the said items.

#### **Insufficient provision of office space**

The PSA argued that most employees were not provided with sufficient office space as some CHWs work from cramped spaces, some under trees, and some work in tents. The GDOH undertook to address the issue of working space and give feedback at the next multilateral meeting scheduled for 14 August 2024

#### **CHWs being supervised by Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and not by GDOH employees**

The PSA argued that it is incorrect for the GDOH to allow its CHWs to be supervised by employees of NGOs who are not employees of the GDOH. The implications are that CHW are treated differently and the provisions of the PMDS Policy are not correctly applied. The GDOH undertook to ensure that the reporting lines of CHWs are corrected. All outstanding PMDS documents are to be resolved and submitted to HR within three months.

#### **Training and development**

The PSA indicated that there are complaints regarding CHWs who undergo training and do not receive certificates owing to non-payment of tuition fees. The GDOH conceded to this irregularity and undertook to conduct an exercise of identifying all trained CHWs, as well as conduct a needs analysis for other CHWs who still need to be trained so that they will all be considered for training and development.

**Danger Allowance for CHWs working in Correctional Centres**

The PSA argued that CHWs placed at correctional centres are at risk but are not considered for a danger allowance. The GDOH conceded to this irregularity and mentioned that it will temporarily move CHWs placed in correctional centers. In the meantime, it will develop a policy that will cater for a danger allowance for these CHWs. The GDOH will provide further developments at the next multilateral forum meeting on 14 August 2024.

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GENERAL MANAGER