

**POLICY ON THE PROVISION OF  
ACCOMMODATION FOR  
IDENTIFIED HEALTH  
PROFESSIONALS CATEGORIES  
AND OTHER CRITICAL SCARCE  
SKILLS EMPLOYEES.**

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
NORTH WEST PROVINCE**

**2012**

**Definitions and abbreviations**

- "Employer" shall carry the same meaning as the word "Department"

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- PSCBC means the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council.
- DPSA means the Department of Public Service and Administration.
- "Department" unless otherwise specified must be construed as reference to the Department of Health in the North West Province and all its institutions and facilities.

## Introduction

The Department of Health is one of the provincial departments in the North West Province. This province is situated centrally and to the north of the Republic of South Africa. Its neighboring province to the north is Limpopo, Gauteng to the south-west, the Free State to the south-east and the Northern Cape to the south-west. Made up of four districts the economic development in the province is varied with the densely populated Bojanala District being the fastest growing area. The greatest part of the province is rural with very little infrastructure development and amenities such as available good schooling etc. According to Statistics SA 2010 report the average life expectancy at birth for both males and females during the period of 2001-2010 was lower than the national average. This compounded by the aforesaid makes the province prone to the movement of staff members from the public sector to private and other provinces. Retention especially of health professionals is one of the priority challenges for the department.

As a result the department has a high turnover rate of health professionals. This results in the high costs of frequent recruiting. The shortage of health professionals has a severe impact on health service delivery. It is therefore necessary that remedies of the most urgent nature should be pursued within current and future budget limitations. As part of the remedies the government has introduced the following programmes: community service for health professionals, entering into agreements with other countries for the deployment of health professionals etc. In addition, the internship

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programme mitigates the skill shortage although it is mandatory experiential training that medical students have to complete before they qualify as doctors.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that there is improvement in the provision of quality health services in the North West Province Department of Health institutions through the retention of health professionals by providing subsidised and or State sponsored accommodation.

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Accommodation for the identified beneficiaries will be provided according to the stipulations in this policy. Management shall implement and adhere to the provisions of the North West Department of Health accommodation policy for health professionals and other critical scarce skills employees.

### **Legislation and prescripts underlining this framework**

The following prescripts underline this policy. In cases where there is a clash in the content, the provisions of the prescripts will supersede the policy.

- ✚ PSCBC Resolution No. 3 of 1999.
- ✚ DPSA Housing Allowance Policy.
- ✚ Regulations for Community Service and Internship.
- ✚ Government to Government Agreements.

### **Scope and applicability**

This policy covers the following categories of employees:

- ✚ Health professionals employed on a government to government agreement.
- ✚ Health professionals doing medical internship programme.

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- ✦ Identified scarce skill categories.

The policy shall be implemented in all Department of Health, North West Province health institutions. It replaces all directives that existed prior to it being approved.

### Policy outputs

- ✦ Increased retention of health professionals within health institutions in the province.
- ✦ Improved provision of quality of services.
- ✦ Improved health outcomes.

### Process

- Based on its own circumstances and prevailing conditions each institution should compile a list of its health professionals and scarce skills employees who will need to be assisted by the State for accommodation. This list will be discussed in the district management structures and recommended to the district chief director for approval. The list should be reviewed annually.
- Managers will ensure that based on the identified needs sufficient budget is allocated for accommodation.
- It is up to the discretion of the hospital management and depending on the availability of the budget that health professionals on community service can be considered for accommodation.
- In case any institution does not have adequate and habitable accommodation, financial resources permitting, the management can procure accommodation privately after securing the approval of the District Chief Director. Such procurement should follow the prescribed Supply Chain Management authority and guidelines.

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- Accommodation in the hospital premises should be prioritized for categories specified in this policy. Noting that employees on Senior Management Level and Middle Management Level already have a component of accommodation in their salary package they are excluded from this policy should be encouraged to secure their own accommodation. This also goes for other employees who through a collective bargaining process receive a housing allowance which should be utilized as a subsidy for own accommodation.
- Any other available accommodation could be reserved for attracting and retaining scarce skills depending on the needs of a particular institution.
- The department may only be responsible for providing available furniture for interns and foreign health professionals on a government-to-government agreement.
- Health professionals on the internship programme and those on government to government agreement will be prioritized. In case there is still available accommodation those on community service could be considered. This is used as a measure to attract and retain community service professionals.
- Institutional managers should enter into a lease agreement with all beneficiaries of this policy. Such agreements should be for the duration of one year and should be reviewed annually.
- Rental to be paid by employees shall be in terms of PSCBC Resolution No. 3 of 1999. Managers should ensure that rental is collected.
- The department cannot be held liable for any loss or damage to personal property irrespective the tenant lives in the State or rented accommodation.
- Notwithstanding all matters, the provision of accommodation shall be guided by the availability of sufficient funds in a particular institution.

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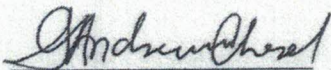
### Guidelines

- Each institution within the confines of this policy should develop its own housing procedures dealing with the accommodation of categories of health professionals stipulated in this herein.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

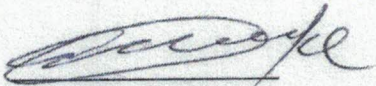
- District Chief Directors shall be responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the accommodation practices and processes in the Department and where necessary develop corrective measures.

Signed,



**Mr. Andrew Kyereh**

**Acting Head of Department**



**Dr M. Masike**

**MEC for Health**