

PUBLIC SECTOR STRIKE AND IMPACT ON THE PUBLIC HEALTH SECTOR

**Presentation to the Portfolio Committee on Health
Minister PA Motsoaledi MP**

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FEATURES OF THE STRIKE

- Not all health workers are on strike
- Doctors are definitely not on strike which is confirmed by SAMA
- Less clear if DENOSA is actively calling on its members to strike but our observation is that most nurses are not on strike but intimidation and fear has kept many away from work
- Most of the intimidation at health facilities reported to be caused by civil servants who are not health workers and therefore not readily identifiable by health management

DOH MANAGEMENT OF THE STRIKE

- NATJOC operational with senior management of all affected departments meeting daily (all affected departments have full time daily presence at NATJOC)
- All PROVJOCs operational; concern is that EC PROVJOC only operational from yesterday
- NDOH gathers information twice a day from provinces to report to DG/Minister

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DOH MANAGEMENT OF THE STRIKE

- Daily teleconferences with HODs and NDOH to report and provide support
- All provinces have contingency plans – all plans shared with NATJOC and PROVJOCs
- National interdict issued on Friday (and two provincial interdicts: GP and KZN)
- SAPS in all provinces now implementing the interdicts

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MANAGEMENT OF THE STRIKE

- SAMHS, the Defence Force and volunteers are providing services in many facilities
- Patients had to be referred to private hospitals last week but with increasing stability of public hospitals this need has dwindled
- The Defence Force has deployed more than 2400 personnel throughout the country
- More than 60% of SAPS deployment is to health facilities

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IMPACT OF THE STRIKE

- Plan of action of strikers is to move from facility to facility disrupting services (first target was hospitals, then CHCs and clinics and now administration)
- In some instances this plan is temporarily successful – as security forces cannot be everywhere
- In many provinces strikers are targeting support services like laundries – SAPS now providing escort services to ensure deliveries of supplies
- Volunteers have been assisting to clean facilities and feed patients

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IMPACT OF STRIKE

- The impact of the strike has been variable by province but latest reports indicate that:
- Western Cape has not been severely affected; sporadic instances of intimidation (Khayalitsha)
- Northern Cape also sporadic with clinics in the Kimberly area affected
- Gauteng: major hospitals were targeted last week with significant disruptions but most major hospitals now functional; Minister and MEC worked in several hospitals starting last Friday and over the weekend

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IMPACT OF THE STRIKE

- KZN: similar to Gauteng with major hospitals targeted including KE 8 and IALAH but these
- EC: major disruptions at large hospitals especially in PE and EL, working with security forces to stabilise the situation
- LP: at least 4 hospitals were closed; Minister has been in contact with the Premier and the security forces to stabilise the situation
- NW: closure of some facilities but signs of stabilisation

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IMPACT OF THE STRIKE

- FS: significant disruption of services especially in the Bloemfontein area with the major hospitals being targeted
- MP: Sporadic incidences but DOH and security forces have good relationship and facilities largely secured – but some facilities have been temporarily closed

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CALL ON ALL STAKEHOLDERS

- Our major concern is to protect life and ensure that patients get the care that they need
- It is critical for the strike to end immediately as lives are being lost
- Need to rapidly stabilise the public health system and continue the work of re-engineering the health system in line with the 10 point plan and the four key deliverables
- All need to work together in this regard under the leadership of the Ministry and Department of Health

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