



# DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

## CORPORATE COMMUNICATION SERVICES

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**TO: ALL MEDIA**

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### **TOWNHILL HOSPITAL: UPDATE**

National Health Minister, Dr Manto Tshabalala-Msimang has established an investigation team to investigate allegations of patient abuse at Townhill Hospital in Pietermaritzburg. The team will be led by Prof Dan Mkhize from the Nelson Mandela School of Medicine and will include of senior officials within national and provincial Departments.

The Minister announced this during her visit with Provincial Health MEC, Peggy Nkonyeni at the institution yesterday. The allegations were first reported in the media on February 6 2005 and they include physical and sexual abuse of patients, theft of patient personal belongings, absenteeism and use of alcohol by staff during work hours.

The National Minister has ordered the investigation team to present a report within the next two weeks.

She highlighted an urgent need for the establishment of a hospital board to assist in ensuring that the hospital functions effectively.

The delegation also established that some challenges facing the hospital are as a result of ineffective management and lack of transformation at the hospital over a longer period. The hospital has not had stable management for sometime and other critical management posts are still vacant.

The hospital management did confirm that there have been cases of health employees working while under the influence of alcohol. They also agreed that there was a problem of absenteeism and



committed themselves to address they challenges as a matter of urgency.

**ENDS.**

**For more information please contact Sibani Mngadi on 0827720161.**