



HEALTH
KwaZulu-Natal

CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS

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TO: ALL MEDIA
DATE: 07 FEBRUARY 2007
EMBARGO: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS CONFERENCE

All media institutions are invited to a Press Conference by the Kwa-Zulu Natal Department of Health. The Press Conference comes as a result of an illegal industrial strike by the nurses in certain health institutions.

The nurses under category ENA and EN (Enrolled Nurse Assistance and Enrolled Nurse) embarked on an unsafe and illegal strike from the 22nd of January 2007 demanding Scarce Skills and Rural Allowances. An ultimatum letter of warning was issued on Tuesday the 30th January of 2007 and nurses that were on strike were given 12 hours to return to work or risk losing their jobs. More than 700 nurses failed to submit to the instructions instead they continued with their illegal exercise and unfortunately the department had to dismiss after they refused to abide to the given ultimatum. The Kwa-Zulu Natal Department of Health maintains that the issue of rural, scarce skill and inhospitable allowances remains the competence of the National Department of Health and relevant structures, which include affected unions, are dealing with matter.

The affected institutions are; Edendale Hospital, GJ Crookes hospital, Ngwelezane hospital, Prince Mshiyeni Memorial hospital, Ntunjambili hospital Lower Umfolozi Memorial Hospital and Umphumulo hospital. However, the department has put necessary plans in place therefore the operation of these institutions is normal and service delivery is back on track. We are utilizing the services of Nursing agencies and nursing students to augment the service.

The Kwa-Zulu Natal MEC for Health Ms. Peggy Nkonyeni has agreed to a request by COSATU to meet all the unions whose members were part of this illegal strike, at 11:00 today. The MEC and the Senior Management of the department will be providing more information regarding the status quo of those affected nurses, the impact of the strike and its outcomes in the health system etc.

uMnyango Wezempilo . Departement van Gesondheid

Fighting Disease, Fighting Poverty, Giving Hope

The details of the Press Conference are as follows:

Venue: Natalia Building 11th Floor S/Tower (Pietermaritzburg Dept. of Health Head Office)

Date: 07 February 2007

Time: 11h00 am

Your attendance will be highly appreciated.

Thank you

Issued by: Corporate Communications –KZN Department of Health

For more information please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Bongani Mpinga on the following numbers: 072 7532 538 or 033 395 3033