



HEALTH
KwaZulu-Natal

CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS

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TO: ALL MEDIA
DATE: 5 February 2007
EMBARGO: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA STATEMENT: DISMISSED NURSES REMAIN DISMISSED

The Head of Department (HoD), Dr BM Nyembezi, in the KwaZulu Natal Department of Health wants to assure the general public that the nurses who were dismissed on Friday the 2nd February 2007 remain dismissed.

This follows a 10 day illegal industrial action by nurses under the banner of the KwaZulu Natal Nurses Committee. This organization has misled nurses under fallacious pretences to undergo on an illegal industrial action affecting a number of institutions. The department issued an ultimatum on the 31 January 2007 for all nurses to return to duty failing which they would be dismissed. On Friday, 2nd February 2007 the Head of Department exercised her right to dismiss these nurses.

The department is of the view that even though the numbers are large, around **728** nurses, to be dismissed; ill-discipline and thuggery cannot be allowed to prevail within the department. The institutions that are affected include Ngwelezana 208 nurses dismissed; Prince Mshiyeni Memorial 220 nurses dismissed; Edendale 141 nurses dismissed; St Benedictine 1 dismissed; GJ Crookes 56 nurses dismissed; and Lower Umfolozi War Memorial 53 nurses dismissed.

As a department we cannot afford to continue to employ and pay people who have shown little or no compassion and commitment to service delivery. Furthermore, the legal framework which governs labour relations in the country has been undermined by the "striking" nurses making mockery the hard gained rights of workers in South Africa. The department respects all nurses and regards them as the backbone of health care services.

Our department is working closely with unions to address the aftermath of the dismissals. The MEC for Health, Ms NP Nkonyeni, will be meeting all unions to address the matter and look at ways of restoring pride and respect to the profession. *"We need workers who would emulate the compassion of Cecilia Makiwane and all courageous and gallant heroes and heroines of the nursing profession. Ma Adelaide Tambo's soul would not rest in piece if we allow her profession to be ridiculed and insulted in the manner that the dismissed nurses have"* is the MEC's view on the matter.

Service delivery in all our institutions remains stable and people are assured that the department would do everything in its power to ensure that service delivery is not compromised.

ENDS

Issued by the Department of Health, KwaZulu Natal

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uMnyango Wezempilo . Departement van Gesondheid

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