



HEALTH
KwaZulu-Natal

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EMBARGO: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RE: WE WILL ALWAYS PROTECT THE INTEGRITY OF OUR PATIENTS

The Department of Health stands by its decision to protect the integrity of patients at Prince Mshiyeni Memorial Hospital. This position will hold regardless of the vicious attack from Inkatha Freedom Party on the Department because we are determined to preserve the rights of our patients.

Patients at hospitals should always be protected and be allowed to heal in a dignified manner. We understand that political parties, including the IFP, and civic organisations always have an interest in our hospitals. We will always respect that and expect them to understand that at these facilities there are patients that have a right to privacy. At these facilities, there are also health professionals who operate under strict professional ethics and they should also be protected.

Hence there are strict set of rules in the department that regulate the visiting of patients at hospitals. We will continue to enforce them without fear or favour. The IFP will be no special case. We would expect members of the Legislature to be honourable and adhere to these rules. It is, however, disappointing to notice that there are some who want to override these rules for the benefit of their narrow political interest.

The Department will not tolerate any political party that want to use patients at our care in health facilities to play political games. We will be very strict, particularly during this election period, on political parties that are hell-bent to use patients as vote fodder.

This follows sharp criticism by the IFP's Chairman, Ms. Zanele Magwaza-Msibi, KwaZulu-Natal Members of Legislature Dr Lionel Mtshali and Dr. Bonginkosi Buthelezi who wanted to visit the Prince Mshiyeni Memorial Hospital with the media in tow.

Issued by:

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