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Media Statement: Health Excellence Awards Come to KwaZulu-Natal

The MEC for Health in KwaZulu-Natal Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo was overjoyed when he witnessed staff and facilities from his province being recognized for excellence at last night's Department of Health Excellence Awards ceremony held at Birchwood Hotel in Gauteng.

"From the perspective of the health worker, this is a very important occasion and I would like to add my congratulations to the thousands of healthcare workers who were awarded tonight," said Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo MEC for Health in KwaZulu-Natal following the conferring of two individuals and two institutions from KwaZulu-Natal.

The Cecilia Makiwane Award was received by Ms Sisana Cebekhulu from UMkhanyakude District (Ntshongwe clinic). The Cecilia Makiwane award is the highest order in the nursing profession. Last year the award was received by Ms Joyce Zitha, who is employed at Umzinto Fixed Clinic and the runner-up was again from the province Ms NE Mngomezulu who is employed at Bethesda hospital. The Marilyn Lehana award was bestowed on Ms Zanele Mthiyane from uMgungundlovu (Taylor's Halt clinic).

The Health Excellence Awards, developed almost 10 years ago, aim to recognize and reward health professionals who demonstrate excellence beyond that required of their positions and who add value to their profession and workplace.

Bestowing the awards to excelling health practitioners from across the country Health Deputy Minister, Dr Gwendoline Ramokgopa, said; "Another fundamental part of our efforts to re-structure our health system is the move away for a costly and ineffective curative or hospital-based system towards one that implements the primary health care approach through making sure that prevention of illness and promotion of wellness become our focus. This is also a cornerstone of the proposed NHI approach."

Two Kwazulu-Natal public health facilities received awards for Most Clean Hospital in the country which was bestowed to Eshowe Hospital and RK Khan Hospital received an award for being the best hospital to have sufficient stock of drugs.

"It is worth noting that this award is coming to this province for the second successive time and to the same district, UMkhanyakude. We hope it will be received as a challenge to all other districts in the province and to nurses in general to work harder in the spirit of continuous quality improvement. We also believe it is indeed a confidence booster to our efforts as a province," said MEC Dhlomo.

ENDS

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Notes:

- ♣ Cecilia Makiwane: the first black Nurse to be registered in South Africa, hence one of the awards is named after her.
- ♣ Marilyn Lehana awards: recognize the indispensable role of nurses in direct patient care and

caring, which after all is what the public expects.

♣ The other awards recognize, for the first time, projects that directly reflect efforts to improve quality in those 6 top priority standards, namely attitudes, cleanliness, waiting times, patient safety and security, infection prevention and control, and availability of medicines and supplies. This is to recognize progress being made in these areas which are so critical for patient care.