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## **“You are doing a wonderful job my son” - an elderly citizen waiting in the queue at RK Khan Hospital told the MEC**

Management, patients and staff were all taken aback when the motorcade of the MEC for Health pulled over at the out patient department (OPD) of RK Khan Hospital this morning for an unannounced visit. Young and old patients were delighted to catch sight of the MEC at their hospital.

“The President said to nurses; ‘we have to change the way the public service works otherwise there will be no improvement in service delivery’ and today I am here to personally bring that message to the staff, management and patients of this hospital,” said MEC Sibongiseni Dhlomo on arrival at RK Khan Hospital.

The MEC had visited the hospital about a year ago on one of his unannounced visits and left with a number of concerns that he had arrived to check progress on this day. Leading these concerns were long queues at the Pharmacy department where patients had complained to the MEC that they had to wake up as early as 03h00 in order to be able to be served. Secondly; the MEC was not impressed with staff attitudes and general cleanliness of the hospital. Some staff members and members of the public had claimed that there was preferential treatment given to “Indian” patients.

Today the MEC walked around the hospital starting with the out patients department through to the maternity and medical wards. As he walked around he spoke to patients and staff. He received very positive feedback especially from the public on progress in improving service delivery. At pharmacy; the public were very upbeat about the changes that have been implemented to improve service delivery since the last visit by the MEC.

“Previously my son,” started Mrs Leyla Maharaj (70 years) a patient who collects chronic medication from the hospital on a monthly basis, “we spent the whole day waiting for medicines but now it hardly takes three hours from the time one collects their card to leaving the hospital.”



Speaking on his impression of the visit MEC Dhlomo said; “When this administration came into office one of the things I announced was the Make Me Look Like A Hospital project. It is a project that seeks to improve the quality of care as well as the look and feel of public health facilities.”

Minister Motsoaledi, continued the MEC, met with all CEOs of this province and clearly outlined six key things that must be changed as a matter of urgency. These included the cutting of long queues, availability and provision of medicines, change of staff attitudes, improving safety and security at public health facilities, improving the general cleanliness and management by walk about.

“So, for these things to happen and for us to realise changes at the pace expected by our people; I chose to conduct the unannounced visits. In this way we are not going to see pockets of improvements but general improvements in the whole province as a matter of urgency,” said MEC Dhlomo.

He further said that government is committed to speedy change and this province has been heralded as a good example of such change as it happened at Prince Mshiyeni Memorial Hospital and elsewhere.

The MEC was however still concerned with the maternal death statistics in the hospital. The Hospital registers at least two (2) maternal deaths per month and he challenged the district office, working with the hospital, to get to the root cause of these preventable deaths.

He said to the nursing and medical manager present; “Women who get pregnant come from somewhere. They are referred to your hospital by a certain clinic, so you need to get to the area where these women come from and speak to the people (especially leaders) about the problems that lead to their demise. In that way we will be able to resolve the problems.”

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