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Media Statement : KZN Health to spend billions on new infrastructure projects and will employ close to 400 artisans

The KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Health Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo; reporting to the Health Portfolio Committee, said his department will be constructing new projects in the new financial year worth billions of rands and also employ about 400 artisans to improve capacity within the department to maintain its infrastructure.

“Among the new projects in the coming financial year are: R1,6 billion for the new Dr Pixley ka Seme Regional Hospital in the INK (Inanda Ntuzuma and KwaMashu) area; a new Pharmaceutical depot worth about R450 million; the refurbishment of Addington Hospital at the cost of R200 million; 4 new Community Healthcare Centers in Jozini, Umzimkhulu, Danhauser and Pomeroy; a Neonatal and Labour wards at Stanger Hospital worth R150 million; refurbishment of a Durban Regional Laundry worth R171 million and an Out-Patient Department as well as a Casualty at Escourt Hospital worth R141 million,” said MEC Dhlomo.

The MEC further reported that the department will be employing close to 400 artisans, with 215 posts currently advertised, in order to improve capacity within the department to maintain infrastructure. These will include Chief Works Inspectors, Artisan Foreman (Electrical and Mechanical), Artisans (Bricklaying, Fitter, Painter, Carpenter and Electricians), Tradesman’s Aid and Handyman.

The MEC was leading a team of senior managers, including the Head of Department Dr Sibongile Zungu, to make the first of monthly presentations to the Health Portfolio Committee. Committee members were overwhelmed and expressed their appreciation in the way the Department has been able to turn things around with regards to infrastructure developments.

The Committee had previously raised concerns, in the 2010/11 financial year, with the under expenditure of the Hospital Revitalization Grant where only 42% of the R500 million was spent by January 2011. Currently; the department reported that it has spent 78% of the total allocation (R427 million) and would spend the remainder of the budget by the end of the financial year.

The department also reported that there were delays in the procurement of machinery due to supply chain management processes and delivery delays as most equipment is ordered from abroad. The committee was generally pleased and congratulated the department for sterling work in the improvement of performance in the infrastructure unit.

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