

## **Media Statement on the passing away of a patient at Newcastle, 06 June 2013**

The MEC for health in KwaZulu-Natal, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo has expressed his distress about the death of a patient in Newcastle as a result of allegedly, having been turned away at the Newcastle Provincial Hospital. The MEC has extended his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.

Dr Dhlomo has ordered the Department to urgently conduct an investigation to establish the facts about the incident. This is to ensure that a similar one does not happen at Newcastle Provincial Hospital or at any of the health care facilities of the Department.

Dr Dhlomo says it is against the precepts of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and government policy for anyone to turn a patient away from a health care facility, whether public or private. MEC Dhlomo says that Government policy dictates that a patient that is presented at health facility, should be attended to, accessed and stabilised before the patient can be referred to the next appropriate health care facility.

He says, although Newcastle Provincial Hospital is a mother and child health care facility, it must still attend, access and stabilise all emergency patients and transfer them to the appropriate level of care. The management of the hospital must ensure that this happens.

“ If investigations by the department reveal that any employee or employees acted contrary to the policy of the department, and as such is found guilty, the department will ensure that they face the full consequences measures that are available to the department in terms of the law”.

The findings of preliminary investigations conducted by the Newcastle Provincial Hospital have revealed that the patient was brought to it by a private motor vehicle which was allowed to enter the gate of the hospital. According to these findings, the relatives of the patient were directed to take the patient to Madadeni Hospital by a nurse from the children's section of the hospital.

ENDS.

ISSUED BY:  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, KWAZULU-NATAL