

MEDIA RELEASE:
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KZN Health MEC comforts relatives of departed employees allegedly killed by their partners

KWAZULU-Natal Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo has urged women not to stay in abusive relationships, but to immediately seek help if they feel that their lives may be in danger.

MEC Dhlomo was speaking at a prayer meeting held at Grey's Hospital yesterday (26 September 2016) to pay tribute to three fallen Department employees, who were all allegedly murdered by their partners.

The employees are:

- Sr Thabisa Daysen Doyisa, a midwife at Edendale Hospital, who was gunned down in her home, in Naperville, in Pietermaritzburg, on 22 April 2016;
- Twenty-eight year-old Nelisiwe Shelembe, a professional nurse from Grey's Hospital, who was shot dead, in Pietermaritzburg, on 07 April 2016 while on her way to work, and
- Mrs Ntokozo Molefe, a labour relations manager who was stabbed to death on 06 March 2016.

A sombre atmosphere hung inside the hall at Grey's Hospital, with relatives of the departed looking on solemnly from the front row seats, as prayers were said and hymns sung.

MEC Dhlomo said that it had been a wish of his to meet these families and help them find closure.

He described healthcare workers in general as "a gift from God, who minister in a wonderful way," adding that their deaths were always difficult to deal with.

"When they die, even if their deaths are natural, it is always painful to us. It is even worse when their lives are taken by people who are supposed to love and protect them.

"The violence that is there in society... whenever you hear a woman has been raped, shot, or stabbed ... it is usually men who are the perpetrators. To all women out there, I wish to say, if it concerns your life and you feel that you are under threat, report it. Do not stay in an abusive relationship."

MEC Dhlomo also urged all nurses in the province to exercise care and compassion towards terminally ill patients, saying that affording them dignity may deliver them from spiritual pain, which may automatically result in relief from physical pain.

"Damp dusting windows in the wards should move towards ensuring that your patients are

always in a dignified state. Wipe their faces, apply petroleum jelly or another ointment... Even when they pass away, it helps relatives cope better when they see that their loved ones were being looked after," he said.

ENDS

Issued by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health