

Update on fire at Port Shepstone Provincial and Mahatam Gandhi Memorial hospitals

23 May 2017

The KZN Department of Health experienced a fire outbreak yesterday (22 May 2017) at Port Shepstone Provincial Hospital, on the south coast, and a fire scare at Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Hospital in Durban.

Regarding the fire outbreak at Port Shepstone Provincial Hospital, which affected certain sections of the institution, management has put in place contingency plans to mitigate the impact of this on healthcare service delivery.

The following has been put in place:

- The orthopaedic ward is closed, and patients are using alternative wards (G Ward and Ward2).
- The paediatric ward has also been closed and patients have been moved to the paediatric outpatient ward;
- The casualty unit has been affected, and will only accept emergency patients for stabilisation before they are referred to neighbouring healthcare facilities.
- Elective operations have been put on hold until the theatres are cleared.
- Out of five theatres, only one is operational. Hospital management is in discussions with neighbouring health facilities to assist with emergency operations.
- Eye clinic patients are requested to come to Outpatient Department for rescheduling of their appointments.
- Elective eye operations will be done at Murchison Hospital and patients will be transported to this healthcare facility.

As some patients files were damaged, patients' relatives are requested to contact the hospital on 039 682 6678 to confirm which hospitals patients have been transferred to.

Regarding the separate incident of a fire scare at Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Hospital, the hospital is now operating normally.

No casualties in the form of death or injury were reported in both incidents. The causes of both fires are still unknown, and will be determined by investigations by the relevant authorities.

KZN Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo has expressed his gratitude and thanked all staff members and partners who helped to evacuate patients, thus ensuring that there were no deaths and injuries.

The Department would also like to thank stakeholders who generously donated by providing bottled water to evacuated patients at Port Shepstone Provincial Hospital.