

# KZN Health MEC concerned about young doctors dying young

30 March 2017

KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Health Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo has held an urgent meeting in Durban where he expressed his concerns about the rising number of doctors who are dying young - and under tragic circumstances.

In a gathering held at Umhlanga last night, MEC Dhlomo was frank in expressing his deep worry that the deaths of many doctors who have been buried in recent years could have been avoided.

What is even worse, the MEC said, is that in many cases the young doctors do not have life insurance, which means they leave their families in dire straits when they die.

The meeting was attended by more than 50 medical officers and medical interns, as well as a number of fully-fledged doctors from various parts of eThekweni Health District.

Recent deaths of young doctors include:

- A doctor from Greys' Hospital who demised in a car accident;
- A doctor from Newcastle who demised after being stabbed by her partner;
- A doctor from Prince Mshiyeni who demised after falling during a traditional ceremony.



MEC Dhlomo said: *"The sudden death of a young healthcare professional is one death too many. The death of a medical doctor is worse. But the death of a young doctor is always disaster because these are people whom we are progressively converting into champions of primary health care, which we are advocating in this country because it focuses on prevention of diseases rather than treatment.*

*Most of the doctors that we train come from impoverished backgrounds, and are the beacons of hope in their communities. They become an inspiration to other young people, while fulfilling the much-needed healthcare needs of rural communities in areas where many people do not want to go and work.*

*There is also heavy reliance on them by their families, as they are expected to assist financially and otherwise. So, when someone like that suddenly dies and they don't have life cover, the effects of this are very acute. It visits untold misery on the lives of many people."*

*"I therefore wish to call upon all of you to bear all of this in mind as you go about your lives. Yes, the demands on you are enormous, but we also call upon you to find ways to take care of yourselves, and safeguard your future."*