

MEC Dhlomo strongly condemns damage to state property by protesters at King Dinuzulu Hospital

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KZN Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo has condemned in the strongest possible terms the actions of protesters who caused damage to state property at King Dinuzulu Hospital in Durban earlier today.

Two protesters sustained injuries while 25 were arrested during the mayhem. They protesters first tried to force their way into the hospital this morning and, in the process, damaged a gate and also burned down a guard hut. They also damaged the palisade fencing, and threw stones into the parking area alongside Howell Rd - damaging two ambulances and a few cars that belong to staff. They intimidated staff and patients and, for some time, ensured that hospital staff and those seeking medical attention could not enter the hospital. The protesters were ultimately prevented by members of the SAPS from entering the hospital. But by 9am, order had been restored and the hospital became operational.

The protesters, who are from a neighbouring informal settlement, did not submit a formal memorandum of grievances. However, it is believed that they are demanding that more people be employed by companies that are contracted to provide security, catering, cleaning and maintenance services at the hospital.

MEC Dhlomo has come out strongly against the actions of the protesters.

“There’s no excuse for any person to raise issues in an unruly and violent manner such as what has happened. We would like to thank the SAPS for coming in to quell the situation. We are hopeful that they will do everything humanly possible to safeguard government property from thuggery and violent behaviour from people who want to raise issues in a violent manner. In a hospital, you cannot expect people to come in and burn buildings because they have a demand that they would like to be addressed, whether by the hospital or by the company that is providing outsourced services. We condemn this in the strongest possible terms. It’s like a person burning a school because they want a clinic to be built; or burning a clinic because they want a road. That behaviour is unruly, and we will not accept it at any given point,” he said