

Emotional, tearful scenes as 300 nurses finally secure permanent employment after years of desperation and suffering (injection of nurses to benefit the poorest of the poor)

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Last Saturday, Nompumelelo Majola had to deal with the sorrow of burying her 65 year-old mother who had succumbed to a long illness. On the day of the funeral, she received a phone call from the KZN Department of Health telling her that her application to work as an Enrolled Nursing Assistant had been successful. "I could not believe it," she said. She had spent the past 13 years struggling to find permanent employment. Today, Ms Majola was among 300 nurses who received their induction and orientation in Pietermaritzburg, having officially reported for duty on Monday. "I'm overjoyed," said the mother of an 11 year-old boy from Mbumbulu, who now works at the Prince Mshiyeni Memorial Hospital. "I'd like to thank President Cyril Ramaphosa and MEC Dhlomo for making our dreams come true."

The stimulus package, which was announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa, aims to boost the public health sector through the creation of more than 5 300 jobs throughout the country. The Department is also finalising the appointment of porters, general orderlies, pharmacy assistants and artisans.

At the nurses' induction, held at Grey's Hospital today, there were plenty tears of joy as nurse after nurse recounted their past struggles.

An emotional Gugu Mdlalose, from KwaMashu, who has been placed at Wentworth Hospital, said: "This was going to be my 14th year of not working since qualifying as a nurse. I am extremely grateful to Bab' Ramaphosa and the entire health team. May God bless you for all that you've done. We had become the laughing stock in the community," she said, fighting back tears.

Her sentiments were echoed by another nurse, Ntombenhle Gazu from Nkandla, who lost her husband in May 2017, just one year after getting married to him. She is allocated at Khombe Hospital. "I am very grateful to Bab' Dhlomo, who has taken me from wearing black mourning gear, and put me in white nurses' uniform. I lost my husband after just one year of getting married. I didn't know what to do because my life was in his hands. He had been doing everything for me. When I heard he had been shot at a cottage... I didn't know what to do because I had nothing. But today, I'm something. And I'll be able to take care of his children. Thank you, Bab' Dhlomo."

MEC Dhlomo expressed his heartfelt gratitude to President Ramaphosa for the Stimulus Package, saying that its beneficiaries will be the vast majority of the population (80% of the people of KZN), who rely on the State for the health needs - particularly those in far-flung areas.



MEC Dhlomo

comforts a weeping Ntombenhle Gazu, while Gugu Mdlalose looks on.



MEC Dhlomo

with some of the 300 nurses

It is a beautiful co-incidence that we are celebrating the induction and orientation of these 300 nurses in the same week that the initiator of this programme, our President uBab' Ramaphosa is in this province," said MEC Dhlomo. "We would have loved for him to see this fruit of his sweat, because these nurses have been employed through the Presidential Stimulus Package, which was announced by him. Today, there are 300 families who have breadwinners. These nurses have brought tears of joy. They are saying they've been sitting at home for over 14 years, becoming the laughing stock in their communities. These are the nurses who are at the bottom of the ladder of the nursing profession, but they mean so much to our people. We hope by injecting 300 of them, we're going to have a change and bring meaning in terms of quality of service to our people."

MEC Dhlomo added that the province will soon be announcing the employment of porters (160 posts); general orderlies (160 posts); pharmacy assistants (50 posts) and artisans (15 posts), who are also employed under the Presidential Stimulus Package.