

Paeds heart doctor takes helm at NMMU health faculty

After seven years at the helm of Dora Nginza Hospital's paediatrics department, cardiologist Dr Lungile Pepeta has left the public sector to become dean of health sciences at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

"I think, looking back, I have gained clinical, research and management experience at Dora Nginza," he said.

"What I enjoyed most was building and working with teams at various levels of healthcare, working with teams that wanted to improve the health of the Eastern Cape population.



Source: Herald

"Although it was challenging to work with the Eastern Cape department of health, I often met leaders and managers who shared the same goal and vision.

"My new role is exciting but also makes me a little anxious. I guess that's normal.

"I'll be joining an established faculty of health sciences and will be setting up new programmes like the medical degree.

"It is the vision of the university, and mine, to train health practitioners who are socially accountable. This we aim to achieve through a transdisciplinary training platform.

"Health practitioners trained this way will be better equipped for South African healthcare needs.

Pepeta was the only paediatric cardiologist in the province's state hospitals for a long time.

He trained several specialists during his tenure and introduced a non-invasive procedure to fix heart defects in children.

Obstetrics and gynaecology head Dr Mfundo Mabenge said Pepeta had always displayed wisdom and dedication.

"We will miss his leadership and good sense of humour.

"His appointment at NMMU is a step in the right direction for the province."

Dr Johani Vermeulen, who established a dedicated paediatric oncology unit under Pepeta's guidance, said his courage as a leader was contagious.

"He always made me believe I could move mountains.

"He is a brilliant doctor and one of the most intelligent people I know, but also a humble family man, a true friend and just an awesome guy."

Eastern Cape department of health spokesman, Sizwe Kupelo, thanked Pepeta for serving the province with humility and integrity.

Pepeta will still have his private practice at Netcare Greenacres Hospital.

Source: *Herald*

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