

Gauteng Health HOD suspended

Gauteng Premier David Makhura has placed the Head of the Department of Health, Dr Tiego Selebano, on precautionary suspension in line with the recommendation of the Health Ombudsman, Professor Malegapuru Makgoba.



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The Gauteng Provincial Government on Wednesday said the Director of Mental Health in the department, Dr Makgabo Manamela, has also been served with a notice of intention to suspend her.

In line with the public service regulations, the Director has 48 hours to respond and give reasons why she should not be suspended.

“The suspension and notice of intention to suspend have been effected in line with recommendations of the report released last week by Makgoba following the investigation into the circumstances surrounding the deaths of mentally ill patients in Gauteng,” said the provincial government.

The report revealed that 94 mentally ill patients died after being removed from the Life Healthcare Esidimeni to 27 non-governmental organisations.

Makgoba investigated the matter at the request of Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi late last year. He was also requested to advise on a way forward.

Upon the release of the report, it was announced that Qedani Mahlangu had tendered her resignation as the Gauteng MEC of Health and a member of the Gauteng Provincial Legislature. Dr Gwen Ramokgopa was sworn in as a Member of the Gauteng Provincial Legislature and appointed as MEC for Health on Monday.

The Premier has appointed Dr Ernest Kenoshi as the Acting Head of Department of Health.

Dr Kenoshi is currently the CEO of Steve Biko Academic Hospital.

“His long track record in public healthcare sector will assist in stabilising the department, strengthen its leadership and ensure the achievement of better health outcomes in the province,” said the provincial government.

Meanwhile, the task team consisting of senior officials; specialists in the area of mental health: doctors, psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses, occupational therapists; civil society organisations and family representatives, are continuing with their work to inspect the various NGOs that have patients who were transferred from Life Esidimeni.

“Twenty NGOs have been visited so far and this process will be concluded by Friday. The team is also working towards identifying institutions that are well-equipped to care for the mental health patients in compliance with the Mental Health Care Act (2002).

“During the inspection, the members of the task team are also checking and examining some of the patients. Family members are constantly engaged on these developments and have representatives in the advisory teams.”

Premier Makhura has reiterated that he will continue to urgently implement the Health Ombudsman’s recommendations without any reservation or delay.

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