

**TAKING LEGISLATURE TO THE PEOPLE (TLP) OVERSIGHT VISIT REPORT  
OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT CONDUCTED AT TONGA HOSPITAL ON 08 SEPTEMBER  
2015 - DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

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**1. INTRODUCTION**

The Legislature conducted its Taking Legislature to the People (TLP) programme at Nkomazi Local Municipality on 7 – 11 September 2015.

After the Pre-TLP oversight visits by the Portfolio Committee on Health and Social Development (the Committee) to Tonga and Shongwe Hospitals on 26 June 2015 respectively, the Committee then re-visited Tonga Hospital during the TLP programme on 08 September 2015.

**2. PURPOSE OF THE TLP OVERSIGHT VISIT**

The purpose of the TLP visit was to assess the progress made on the implementation of House resolutions, specifically on the improvement made on the National Core Standards (NCS) post the “Pre Taking Legislature to the People” which was conducted on 22 - 26 June 2015;

**3. METHOD OF WORK**

The Legislature notified all Departments accordingly about the TLP oversight visits to be conducted and the purpose thereof. Invitations were then sent to the respective departments including the Department of Health, management of the Hospital and the Municipality requesting them to be part of the visits.

- On 08 September 2015, the Portfolio Committee on Health and Social Development conducted their oversight visit to Tonga Hospital.
- On 09 September 2015, the Social Transformation Cluster jointly with the Economic Cluster conducted a public hearing at KaMhlushwa Stadium.

#### **4. OBSERVATIONS**

**The Committee observed that:**

- There is improvement on compliance with the National Core Standards particularly on the six priority areas;
- The security fencing project that was underway during the last visit that was conducted on 26 June 2015, was completed.

#### **5. INTERACTION WITH THE MANAGEMENT OF THE HOSPITALS AND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

##### **5.1 TONGA HOSPITAL**

Mr. Mdluli, the District Director presented the progress report as follows:

- One of the three wards that were reported to be unutilized during the previous visit due to staff shortage is currently being in use; started on 01 September 2015 with all the needed resources. The other two unused wards will be opened subject to the availability of funds to appoint staff.
- The Department was in the process of repairing the air conditioning unit in the hospital, however, the central unit of the air con that supplies to the

ICU and the Pharmacy was addressed, only the split unit of the Air conditioner was still being installed.

- Another phase of Operation Letsema would be launched to further address the orthopedic backlog.
- The installation of surveillance cameras has been prioritised for the 1st quarter of the next financial year (April-June 2016), due to budgetary constraints
- Most of the medical equipment and other resources that were not available during the first visit have been procured; and already been received whilst others are still to be delivered.
- The X-Ray machine is functional.
- Male and female patients have been segregated no longer sharing a ward.
- The progress being made on the six priority areas is as follows:

<b>Six Priority Areas</b>	<b>Compliance 26/06/2015</b>	<b>Compliance 08/09/2015</b>
Cleanliness	63%	80%
Staff Attitude	62%	80%
Infection control and prevention	62%	90%
Waiting Time	60%	80%
Availability of Medicine	95%	90%
Patient & Staff safety	75%	100%

## **5.2 Comments by the Committee**

The Committee appreciated the progress reported and encouraged continued improvement on health services rendered to the public.

### **Availability of Medicine**

The Committee noted a drop on the availability of medicines from 95% during the Pre-TLP visit to 90% - on the follow up visit; the reasons for the 5% drop were

requested. The Department reported that, medicines which are not in stock in the facilities are those which are currently unavailable in the country due to the inability to supply by some manufacturers, while some are on back order. Currently, the matter is being addressed by the National Department of Health.

### **Staff Attitude**

Noting the report by the District Director on Staff Attitude rated at 80%, the Committee enquired on how this priority area was measured. The Committee encouraged that good work must be acknowledged and appreciated not always criticizing poor performance. The Department reported that staff attitude is one of the elements of the National Core Standards for health facilities and is determined by the tool which was developed by the National Department of Health for measuring compliance with the standards.

### **Patient and Staff Safety**

The Department reported to have prioritized the installation of burglar doors in both hospitals during the next financial year, 2016/17. At Tonga Hospital in the following areas - Pharmacy, Maternity Unit, Kitchen and Casualty; while at Shongwe Hospital would be at the Pharmacy and Kitchen.

### **Medical Equipment**

The Committee noted that some medical equipment were still to be procured, and wanted to know when it would be procured. The Department reported that the identified equipment will be procured before the end of the current financial year (31 March 2016).

### **Vacancies**

The Department reported that there are 1571 posts which have been prioritised for filling during the current financial year; later, the Department decided to re-prioritize the payment of accruals than the filling of the positions.

The Committee further enquired on the vacancy rate of Doctors in Tonga Hospital. The Department reported that based on the current organisational structure of Tonga hospital, the vacancy rate for doctors is at 85%; there are seven (7) fulltime Doctors, 2 x 5days/8hours Doctors and 19 sessional Doctors out of 46 posts). The Department further stated that the vacancy rate challenge will be addressed after the payment of accruals.

### **Air Conditioning**

Noting that the installation of the split unit of the air conditioner was underway, the Committee wanted to know when this process would be completed. The Department reported that the maintenance/servicing of the air conditioners is planned to be completed by 31 October 2015.

### **Orthopedic Backlog**

Having noted that another phase of Operation Letsema would be launched to address the orthopedic backlog, the Committee wanted to know how long the Department would spend to address the orthopedic backlog and when would this project start. The Department reported that the outreach services by Themba Hospital to Tonga Hospital are mandatory and significant; the patient backlog of orthopedic patients at Tonga hospital from April to 14 September 2015 is 103.

### **Water Security**

Aware that the hospital still has a challenge with shortage of water, the Committee asked the Department on measures put in place to addressing this challenge. The Department reported that pressure pumps will be installed to the Jojo tanks to eliminate the need for staff to use buckets in carrying water from water tanks to the wards by 31 October 2015.

### **Shongwe Hospital CEO**

The Committee noted that the CEO post at Shongwe Hospital was still not filled and enquired when it is planned to be filled. The Department reported that the

process of shortlisting and interviewing will be finalised before the end of October 2015 and appointment will be done by 30 November 2015.

### **5.3 FINDINGS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE**

After the interaction with the Department and hospital management, the Committee found that:

- a. Two wards that were found not in use during Pre-TLP are still not in use due to staff shortage;
- b. The hospital has a high vacancy rate, with doctors vacancy rate at 85% as a result of the filling of posts being halted for the payment of accruals ;
- c. The installation and servicing of the air conditioners is planned to be completed by 31 October 2015;
- d. Most of the medical equipment and other resources that were not available during the first visit have been procured and delivered; however, some are yet to be procured;
- e. The Department has planned to install water pressure pumps to the Jojo tanks by 31 October 2015 to address the challenge of water shortage in the hospital;
- f. The Shongwe Hospital CEO post is planned to be filled by 30 November 2015

### **5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE**

After the deliberations and the in loco inspection, the Committee recommended that the Department must:

- a. For *finding a. and b.*: Fast-track the finalization of the payment of accruals and prioritise the appointment of the required nurses and doctors once the

reprioritization of budget and appointments is done to enable the functioning of the two unused wards and for improved service delivery;

- c. Ensure that all the air conditioners within the hospital are functional and maintained; also submit a progress report by 31 December 2015.
- d. Submit a detailed progress report on the procurement of the medical equipment and resources (indicate what has been procured and delivered – inclusive of the expenditure, what still needs to be procured – inclusive of the estimated costs and the anticipated delivery date by 31 December 2015;
- e. Ensure that the water pressure pumps are installed by 31 December 2015;
- f. Fast-track the appointment of a CEO at Shongwe Hospital for effective service delivery.

## **6. PUBLIC HEARING AT KAMHLUSHWA STADIUM**

The public raised the following during the public hearing:

### **Mgobodzi Clinic**

The public appreciated that the Mgobodzi Clinic was now operating from 07h00 to 19h00. However, the public complained that the clinic has now a shortage of personnel because most of the nurses are working on the outreach program through the mobile clinic.

### **Schoemansdal Clinic**

The public reported that Schoemansdal Clinic is very small and it needs to be upgraded. It was further reported that the waiting area is too small that the patients have to wait outside; only to be called in when they are next in line.

### **Langeloop Clinic**

The public reported that the clinic has only two nurses working and further alleged that they cannot manage the influx of patients. This also lead to very long waiting hours or even having to return the next day for health care.

### **Hand-over of Wheelchairs**

In the absence of MEC for Health, Mr. GP Mashego; on his behalf MEC for Social Development, Ms. NS Mtsweni handed the following beneficiaries wheelchairs:

1. Nkosinathi Tibane
2. Mandla Fundzama
3. Simon Magagula
4. Samson Khoza
5. Thembi Mkhize
6. Zacharia Themba
7. Dumisile Mkhabela
8. Makhonela Sambo
9. Khanyasile Nkomo
10. George Mawela
11. Abraham Ndlovu
12. Senzo Masango.

The Chairperson of the Committee, Hon P Ngobeni assisted MEC Mtsweni with the hand-over. She also expressed words of appreciation on behalf of the Committee and the beneficiaries to MEC GP Mashego in his absentia and MEC NS Mtsweni.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE**

With regard to issues raised during the public hearing, the Committee recommended that the Department must:



- a) The extension of working hours from 07:00- 19:00 done at the Mgobodzi Clinic is much appreciated; however, the Department must prioritise the appointment of the required nurses at Mgobodzi and Langeloop Clinics after the payment of accruals; and also submit a progress report by 31 December 2015
- b) Consider and plan for the upgrading of Schoemansdal Clinic to address among others the challenge of not having a waiting area due to the small size of the clinic; and also submit a progress report by 31 December 2015.

**The Department should provide a progress report on the implementation of House resolutions on or before 31 December 2015.**

## **8. CONCLUSION**

The Chairperson would like to express her heartfelt gratitude to all the Honourable Members of the Portfolio Committee on Health and Social Development for their attendance and active participation during the TLP Programme. She further wishes to thank the Department, the hospital management and the Legislature staff for providing support to the Committee.



**HON. P NGOBENI**

**CHAIRPERSON: PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH  
AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

18/11/15

**DATE**