

TAKING LEGISLATURE TO THE PEOPLE (TLP) OVERSIGHT VISITS REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT CONDUCTED AT MORGENZON CLINIC ON 14 SEPTEMBER 2016 - DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

1. INTRODUCTION

The Legislature conducted its Taking Legislature to the People (TLP) at Lekwa Local Municipality from 12-16 September 2016.

After the Pre-TLP oversight visits by the Portfolio Committee on Health and Social Development (the Committee) to Standerton Hospital and Morgenzon Clinic on 24 and 25 August 2016 respectively, the Committee then re-visited Morgenzon Clinic during the TLP programme on 14 September 2016.

2. PURPOSE OF THE PRE-TLP OVERSIGHT VISITS

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 August 2016;

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 clinic and the Municipality requesting them to be part of the programme.

- On 14 September 2016, the Portfolio Committee on Health and Social Development conducted their oversight visit to Morgenzon Clinic.
- On 15 September 2016, the Social Transformation Cluster jointly with the Economic Cluster conducted a public hearing at Sakhile Stadium.

4. OBSERVATIONS

The Committee observed the following:

- There is improvement on compliance with the NCS by all the health facilities in the Lekwa Local Municipal area, particularly the six priority areas; however there is room for further improvement.
- The Department recently introduced a new electronic filing system used in all the health facilities in Gert Sibande District, though there were challenges that were noted with the system; subsequently been addressed and the system is reportedly very effective.
- Training of hospital boards will be conducted by the end of September 2016.

5. INTERACTION WITH THE MANAGEMENT OF THE CLINIC AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

5.1 MORGENZON CLINIC

Ms. Siphon Motau, the Chief Director: Primary Health Care (representing the Department) presented the progress report on the Clinic's compliance with the National Core Standards.

- The Department reported that the issue of a sessional doctor at the clinic was being attended to with urgency and progress report was to be forwarded to the Legislature in due cause;
- The Department also reported that it was in interactions with the Municipality on the issue of the call centre in Bethal (serving the whole Gert Sibande District) and the ambulance stationed at Morgenzon Clinic, particularly of issues of pre-approval for emergency cases;
- The Department further reported that as of 01 April 2017, the Clinic will operate seven (07) days weekly for improve accessibility for 8 hours daily;
- Commencement date for the facility renovation including new fencing will be November 2016; this will be done through the NHI In-Kind Grant. The Department further clarifies that Moepeng Trading 40 is the appointed contractor and not Roswika as earlier reported;
- A new air conditioning unit for the medicine room has been installed and it is functional;
- On the new electronic patient filing system, the system has been fixed, WI-FI settings reset and connections restored;
- Recruitment for the cleaner was in progress and planned to be finalized by 31 October 2016. The payment of leave gratuities to the concerned family were yet to be processed (waiting for beneficiary to submit claims), the family has been contacted on the urgency of the matter.

5.2 COMMENTS BY THE COMMITTEE

Sessional Doctor

The Committee noted with concern that the issue of a sessional doctor for the Clinic was not mentioned in the progress report. The Department reported that a Doctor from Bethal hospital has started to support the facility with effect from 09 September 2016, support visits are conducted weekly on Fridays.

Ambulance

The Committee requested for progress report on the issue of EMS ambulances. The Department reported that the challenge regarding the ambulance that is stationed at Morgenzon Clinic that cannot assist patients when needed around the area without approval is noted. The Department reported that the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Call Centre is at Evander, the Department outlined that the reason for having a Call Centre is to prioritize emergency cases, monitor the usage of ambulances and the response times. In case of an emergency, patients in the facilities will be prioritized but a call will still need to be logged for record keeping.

Contractor for the renovation and fencing project at the Clinic

During the pre-TLP oversight visit, the Committee noted that RoSwika Construction was appointed for the fencing project, however it is now reported that Moepeng Trading 40 is the appointed contractor and no longer Roswika. The Committee requested for clarity in this regard. The Department reported that Contractors for Infrastructure projects in Gert Sibande District are appointed by the National Department of Health. Roswika is contracted for upgrading and maintenance of health facilities in Lekwa sub-district; however Morgenzon clinic is grouped with Dipaleseng PHC facilities which are to be maintained by Moepeng Trading 40.

Staff Complement for the increased operating hours

Noting that the Clinic is reportedly going to operate 7 days weekly, the Committee enquired on the staff complement for improved service delivery. The Department reported that currently the Clinic has only four Professional Nurses including the Operational Manager. For the facility to operate seven days a week, the Department reported that three more Professional Nurses, 2 Enrolled Nurses,

1 Data Capturer, 1 Admin Clerk and 1 extra cleaner are to be appointed to increase the envisaged days of operation.

5.3 FINDINGS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE

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

- I. The Commencement date for the facility renovation including new fencing will be November 2016. Moepeng Trading 40 is the appointed contractor and not Roswika as earlier reported;
- II. Recruitment for the cleaner was in progress and planned to be finalized by 31 October 2016.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE

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

- I. Provide detailed progress report on the clinic's renovation project if any by 30 November 2016;
- II. Provide progress report on the filling of the cleaner post by 30 November 2016.

The Committee also considered progress reported on issues raised at Standerton Hospital during the pre-TLP oversight visit.

5.5 STANDERTON HOSPITAL

Ms. Siphon Motau, the Chief Director: Primary Health Care (representing the Department) also presented the progress report on the hospital's compliance with the National Core Standards.

- The Department reported that the scope of work for Standerton Hospital is to renovate the entire hospital including the mechanical and electrical works. The project will be done through the Health In-kind Grant. The Department reported that the contractor was planned to commence with work on 05 September 2016, however; the contractor's safety plan was not approved and delayed commencement, and the contractor is reportedly on site. The Department further reported that the renovation of the house for staff accommodation is included in the scope of work.
- The Department reported to prioritise among other critical posts, the posts on Waste Management, Quality Assurance and Infection Control.
- A Clinical Manager was reportedly appointed but resigned by end of July 2016, the Department reported that processes for replacement were underway; a letter of appointment has been issued and the Department is awaiting the acceptance letter from the candidate.

5.6 COMMENTS BY THE COMMITTEE

The Committee advised that the Department should escalate pressing issues as and when they arise to the National Department for improved service delivery and also make use of the National Council of Provinces on certain matters for excellent outcomes. i.e: funding (for human capital and infrastructure development), availability of drugs, to mention but a few.

5.7 FINDINGS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE

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

- a. The R 23 million hospital renovation project from the National Department, is yet to commence, the project was partly delayed by the disapproval of the contractor's safety plan. However, the contractor is reportedly on site;
- b. An letter of appointment has been issued for the Clinical manager post and the Department is awaiting the acceptance letter from the candidate;
- c. Training of hospital boards will be conducted by the end of September 2016.

5.8 RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE

After the deliberations, the Committee recommended that the Department must:

- a. Provide progress report on the approval of the revised contractor's safety plan and also to report on the revised commencement and planned completion date for the project, by 30 November 2016;
- b. Provide progress report on the filling of the Clinical manager post by 30 November 2016;
- c. Provide progress report on the training of hospital boards, by 30 November 2016.

6. PUBLIC HEARING

The public raised the following during the public hearing:

Msimang Clinic

The public appreciated the good services rendered by health professionals at Msimang Clinic, citing that the health professionals are committed and at times goes out of their way for service delivery. The public went on to request for an additional professional nurse because of the high influx of patients and the limited available health professionals. The Department has noted with appreciation the good work done by the health professionals (Sister Mphuti and Sister Ndaba); certificates of appreciation will be handed to them and other outstanding health professionals for encouragement and to boost staff morale.

Lillian Mambakazi CHC

The public complained about long waiting time at Lillian Mambakazi CHC. The Department reported that the CHC is one of the best performing health facilities in the district. The Department further reported that there is a new Operational manager and committed that the situation is going to be assessed and addressed accordingly.

Morgenzon Clinic

The public requested that operating hours at Morgenzon Clinic be increased for improved access, since the clinic is the only health facility 45km out of Standerton and also not operational during weekends. The Department reported that as of 01 April 2017, the Clinic will operate seven (07) days weekly for improve accessibility for 8 hours daily and the required additional personnel will be prioritized and appointed accordingly.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) (Ambulances)

The public complained about the non-availability of ambulances in cases for emergency and/or delayed response time thereof. The Department reported that EMS managers in the districts were scheduled to meet on 16 September 2016 on the management of EMS inclusive of ambulances. A report on the meeting is to be submitted to the MEC's office for a way forward. The Committee further advised that contact details of EMS managers should be made available for the public in all health facilities for improved service delivery – to improve accessibility where necessary.

Having noted all the concerns raised by the public, the department committed to improve its services to the Lekwa community.

6.1 Recommendation on the issues raised during the public hearing

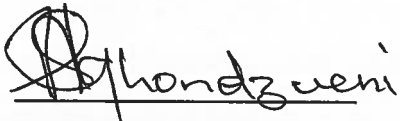
The Committee recommended that the department must provide a detailed progress report on all the issues raised during the public hearing by 30 November 2016.

The Chairperson requests the House to adopt the report with its findings and recommendations and that a progress report on the implementation of House resolutions be provided on or before Friday, 30 November 2016.

7. CONCLUSION

The Chairperson would like to express her heartfelt gratitude to all the Honourable Members of the Portfolio Committee on Health and Social Development and the NCOP Permanent Delegates for their attendance and active participation during the TLP Programme. She further wishes to thank the Department, the municipality and the management of the health facilities for the

services rendered and the Legislature staff for providing support to the Committee.

P.P. 

HON. P NGOBENI

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

13/10/16

DATE