

**TAKING LEGISLATURE TO THE PEOPLE (TLP) OVERSIGHT VISITS
REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT CONDUCTED AT NEWTON CLINIC AND MIDDLEBURG
HOSPITAL ON 15 MARCH 2017 - DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

1. INTRODUCTION

The Legislature conducted its Taking Legislature to the People (TLP) at Steve Tshwete Local Municipality from 13-17 March 2017.

The Portfolio Committee on Health and Social Development (the Committee) visited Newton Clinic and Middleburg Hospital during the TLP programme on 15 March 2017.

2. PURPOSE OF THE TLP OVERSIGHT VISITS

The purpose of the TLP visit was to assess the health facilities infrastructure and the compliance on the National Core Standards (NCS) by the two health institutions.

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 hospital, the Municipality, AG's office, Provincial Treasury, SALGA and Public Service Commission; requesting them to be part of the TLP programme.

- On 15 March 2017, the Portfolio Committee on Health and Social Development conducted their oversight visits to the health facilities.
- On 16 March 2017, the Social Transformation Cluster jointly with the Economic Cluster conducted a public hearing at Themba Senamela Stadium.

4. OBSERVATIONS

The Committee observed the following:

- Newton Clinic is very small with limited space for waiting area and consultation room;
- The kitchen is used as a counselling room;
- The reception area is used as the filling area;
- There is no proper/user friendly filling system at the clinic and this contributes to the long waiting time;
- The clinic is clean and well kept. During the visit, the clinic did not have water due to a pipe burst, compromising the infection prevention and control;
- For toilets, personnel are using a septic tank system and patients are using the bio-chemical one.
- There is construction underway for the new hospital, the on-going project compromises compliance with the National Core Standards.

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

5.1 NEWTON CLINIC

Overview by the MEC: Mr. GP Mashego

- The MEC indicated that Department is in negotiations with Eskom to construct a new health facility in Newtown and a stand has already been allocated by the local municipality.
- The clinic has serious challenges in terms of operation; there are only two nurses – one Operational Manager and one Professional Nurse. The clinic does not have a Data Capturer, no Enrolled Nurse, no Enrolled Nursing Assistant and no Pharmacist.
- The structure is very small, both males and females are sharing toilets and the consultation rooms are not enough.
- The clinic is doing well in terms of TB success rate and there is 100% coverage in terms of HIV positive clients on Initiated Prophylactic Treatment which prevents them from getting TB infections.

Presentation by the HOD: Dr. S Mohangi

The HOD reported that

- The clinic operates 8 hours, 5 days a week;
- There is a challenge of staff shortage, the clinic is assisted by a Pharmacy Assistant from Middleburg Hospital;
- The clinic is at 74% expenditure on its R2 551 500 annual budget;
- Compliance with the National Core Standards as per self-assessment report:

SERVICE ELEMENT	2015/16	2016/17
Availability of medicine and supplies	100%	100%
Infection prevention and control	96%	98%
Cleanliness	85%	98%
Patient safety and security	85%	95%
Positive staff attitude	85%	97%
Patient waiting time	90%	86%

5.2 COMMENTS BY THE COMMITTEE

New Clinic

The Committee noted that the Department has plans to build a new clinic, however, emphasised that the issue of toilet needs urgent intervention. The Department reported that it is currently in discussions with Eskom for the construction of a new clinic and a site has been secured. However the following identified infrastructure issues will be addressed during the first quarter of 2017/18.

- 4 patient toilets (1 Male with urinal and 3 Female toilets)
- 1 hand washing basin
- 2 Staff toilets
- 1 Outside tap
- Shelter

Shortage of Personnel

The Committee cited that even if the new clinic is built, the challenge of shortage of staff needs to be addressed, the Committee asked if the Department has initiated the recruitment process or are there any plans to consider recruiting retired nurses, under the current limited resources. The Department reportedly has plans in place to ensure that the new built clinic will have enough personnel

as per the WISN staffing norms. However there are plans in place to recruit additional sub-category staff to alleviate the pressure from the current limited personnel at the clinic. Recruitment of the following Staff categories will be concluded during the first quarter of 2017/18:

- 1 x Enrolled Nurses
- 1 x Enrolled Nurses Assistance
- 1 x Data Capturer

5.3 FINDINGS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE

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

- a. The Department is in discussion with ESKOM for the construction of a new clinic; a site has been secured.
- b. The structure is very small, both males and females are sharing toilets and the consultation rooms are not enough. However the Department reported that the following infrastructure issues will be addressed during the first quarter of 2017/18:
 - 4 patient toilets (1 Male with urinal and 3 Female toilets)
 - 1 hand washing basin
 - 2 Staff toilets
 - 1 Outside tap
 - Shelter
- c. The clinic has a serious challenge of staff shortage which impacts negatively in the daily operation of the clinic. *(there are only two nurses – one Operational Manager and one Professional Nurse. The clinic does not have a Data Capturer, no Enrolled Nurse, no Enrolled Nursing Assistant and no Pharmacist).*

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE

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

- a. Provide a progress report on the discussion with Eskom by 31 May 2017;
- b. Adhere to its commitment of addressing the challenge of infrastructure; like the sharing of toilets by both males and females including the others as stated in finding (b). A progress report be provided before or by 30 June 2017 as per the department's commitment;
- c. Adhere to its commitment of filling the following positions before the end of the 1st quarter, 30 June 2017 – (1 x Enrolled Nurses; 1 x Enrolled Nurses Assistant, 1 x Pharmacist and 1 x Data Capturer).

6. MIDDLEBURG HOSPITAL

Overview by the MEC: Mr GP Mashego

The MEC indicated that:

- There was once a march to the hospital late 2016, organized by the Conservation Party joined by the public on allegations of patients neglect and this attracted bad media coverage.
- Subsequently to the march and bad media coverage, the MEC visited the hospital number of times, he also acknowledged that the state of affairs at the hospital was really bad; light globes were not working, boilers not functional, the dilapidation of the hospital building and the hospital was very dirty to mention but a few.
- The hospital still has a challenge in terms of security as a result of the security personnel cut.

- With the refurbishment project, the Department constructed the boom gate and installed paving on the routes. The kitchen and medical ward A has been refurbished; the nurses' residence is under construction.
- The contractor initially appointed by the National Department of Health was released from his contract after failing on the job and new project team consisting of consultants has been appointed, the project is scheduled to be completed by June 2017.
- The hospital is not performing well, not compliant with the National Core Standards.
- In February 2017, Emalahleni Coal, Glencore and Re-Action donated medical equipment worth R900 000-00 to 22 health facilities in Nkangala District. These companies have partnered with the Department in the construction of a number of clinics like Kwazamokuhle CHC in Hendrina.
- The hospital board would be dissolved because proper processes were not followed.

Presentation by the HOD: Dr S Mohangi

The HOD reported that:

- The hospital has 25 doctors, the Department will strengthen monitoring and evaluation of services rendered;
- The hospital is poorly performing, not compliant with the National Core Standards. The Department plans to conduct analysis on the factors resulting to the poor performance and to address the challenges accordingly.

6.1 COMMENTS BY THE COMMITTEE

Infrastructure

Noting that the on-going project on the construction of the hospital attributes to the hospitals' failure to comply with the National Core Standards, the Committee asked what measures were in place to address the identified challenges whilst continuing with the construction. The Department has reportedly concluded approval of clinical briefs. The new Middleburg Hospital will be built in phases commencing with phase 1 in 2017/18 at a budget of R 268 million and to be completed in 2020 at an estimated cost of R 908 472 000. However, maintenance will continue to take place while finalising the new High Tech facility.

Performance and Compliance with NCS

Acknowledging the Department's report on the declining performance of the hospital and management's contribution on the matter, the Committee requested the Department to submit a turnaround strategy that will address the poor performance, emphasizing that the strategy must indicate if human resources is adequate to ensure performance. The Department reported that it will be developing a Turn-around strategy to address poor performance of the hospital against National Core Standards (NCS) and in-turn improves the Hospital's efficiencies. The Accounting officer will submit the strategy to the Portfolio Committee by end of June 2017. The Department has reportedly determined and costed the required staff to ensure that the Hospital functions at optimal level to improve poor performance.

7. FINDINGS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE

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

- a. Since there is non-compliance with the National Core Standards (NCS) the overall performance of the hospital has declined. There is no turnaround strategy to address the non-compliance with the NCS but the Department promised to finalise the development of the strategy before 30 June 2017.
- b. The hospital has been poorly managed by its Board.
- c. The nurses' residence is under construction (refurbishment) and is scheduled to be completed before 30 June 2017.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE

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

- a. Strengthen the monitoring and evaluation system of the hospital and ensure full compliance with the National Core Standards, whilst fast tracking the finalization of the turnaround strategy. Provide progress report by 30 June 2017 as per the Department's commitment.
- b. The Hon MEC must take a decision on the hospital Board, based on its poor performance and provide a progress report by 30 June 2017.
- c. Adhere to its deadline regarding the refurbishment project of the nurses' residence. A progress report must be provided before or by 30 June 2017 as per the Department's commitment.

9. PUBLIC HEARING

The public raised the following during the public hearing:

- The Clinic in ward 06 is very small;
- There is no clinic in ward 10, Nhlalamnandi. Community members reliant to the clinic in Nasaret; request for at least a mobile clinic visits as an interim measure;
- Need for a clinic in Rockdale or at least mobile clinic visits as an interim measure.

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 June 2017.

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 30 June 2017.

10. 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 municipality and the management of the health facilities for the services rendered and the Legislature staff for providing support to the Committee.



HON. P NGOBENI

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

09-05-2017

DATE