

FOR PSA MEMBERS: LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH)

25-08-2023

Non-compliance with *Occupational Health and Safety Act* at Vleifontein Clinic

The PSA visited Vleifontein Clinic in Vhembe District on 23 August 2023 as part of service delivery and engagement with members. The PSA witnessed terrible conditions of employment in clear contravention of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)*. It was discovered that there is a bee nest on the premises, which has been there for almost a year without attention, despite the employer's knowledge of this. The bees attacked a man who was cutting grass at the Clinic and pose danger to employees and patients, especially as temperatures increase and bees become more aggressive.

Upon engagement with the employer, it was apparent that there were numerous challenges at the Clinic. Staff at the Clinic had been reduced without any explanation, although the employer expected the same output. Around 2011, there were eight professional nurses. Currently there are only five, whilst four enrolled nurses have been reduced to one, and four cleaners to only two. The Department had been using EPWP workers, however, currently there are none, leaving the Clinic without groundmen or EPWP workers. This is the impact of government's obsession with reducing the cost of employees even if it affects service delivery negatively.

The employer is failing dismally to ensure that the workplace is safe and without risk to employees. Upon engagement with the local manager, she indicated that she reported the bee problem to her superiors, but no help was provided. The PSA escalated the matter to the Department of Employment and Labour to conduct an inspection. The issue of incapacity at the Clinic, with only one enrolled nurse, forcing other employees to do this work when she is off or on leave will be addressed with the employer. Further, one cleaner is also facing the mammoth task of cleaning the entire Clinic when the other is on leave.

Members will be informed of developments.

Shop stewards and members are urged to constantly assess the working environment and to immediately report any non-compliance to the PSA Provincial Office on 015 295 0500 / queen.seema@psa.co.za.

Employees who want to join the PSA can contact Lawrence Muvhango on Lawrence.muvhango@psa.co.za / 082 880 8995 or Paulina Moloto on Paulina.moloto@psa.co.za / 082 880 8957.

GENERAL MANAGER