



GAUTENG PROVINCE

HEALTH
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MEDIA STATEMENT

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ALTERNATIVE BUILDING TECHNOLOGIES RELIEVING PRESSURE ON GAUTENG HOSPITALS

The Alternative Building Technologies (ABT) structures that were erected as part of response measures to the COVID-19 pandemic have not only helped to decongest and relieve patient overload in four Gauteng public, hospitals but have also allowed for the expansion of healthcare services.

These hospitals include the Jubilee District Hospital, Bronkhorstspuit District Hospital, Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital (CHBAH) and Dr George Mukhari Academic Hospital (DGMHAH).

Currently, the 300 bedded ABT structure at Jubilee Hospital has been divided into five 35-bedded and five 25-bedded units. The 35-bedded units include two male and two female medical wards, and one surgical ward. The 25-bedded units include the Intensive Care Unit, Gynaecology and Choice of Termination of Pregnancy Units, Sub-acute or step down unit, Medico Legal Clinic and Male Medical Circumcision Clinic, as well as a staff wellness clinic.

The structure has allowed for continuation of services while infrastructure refurbishments on some parts of Jubilee Hospital are underway. During the recent Cholera Outbreak in the Hammanskraal area, the ABT structure played a pivotal role as two wards were used to admit patients suspected to have and those with confirmed Cholera disease. The separation of the patients also prevented cross infection.

The 150-bedded ABT structure at Bronkhorstspuit Hospital has allowed for the expansion of services and increased bed capacity, relieving pressure on Mamelodi Regional Hospital. The hospital now offers diagnostic services such as sonography which is housed in the ABT structure.

Post COVID-19, the unit has been utilised for a 10-bedded 24-hour Accident and Emergency (A&E) Unit, 30-bedded male medical ward, and for optometry and ophthalmology services. A total of 116 beds will be repurposed to accommodate 36 medical beds, 36 surgical beds, 16 paediatric beds, 14 A&E beds, 14 isolation beds, and a rehabilitation unit for physio, occupational and speech therapy, and podiatry services.

The 500-bedded ABT structure at CHBAH was initially used as a stepdown for stable COVID-19 patients. However, when cases became less, it was then used as a step down unit for surgical and internal medicine departments.

MEC for Health and Wellness, Nomantu Nkomo-Ralehoko revealed in a written response to a question in the legislature that the structure has not been in use for 3 months,

however, plans to use the facility as a step down for internal Medicine and Surgical Departments remain.

“Further plans include to reconfigure the structure to accommodate a multidisciplinary Comprehensive Oncology and Gynaecology Unit. Repurposing the facility to become an Oncology Unit will provide additional capacity for cancer treatment thus reducing waiting times and improving outcomes for the affected patients.

“The reason for relocating gynaecological inpatient and outpatient services to the repurposed ABT is to release space and additional beds to accommodate the overflow of patients in maternity and improve compliance to infection control principles,” said MEC Nkomo-Ralehoko.

Meanwhile, the DGMAH uses sections of its 300-bedded ABT structure for two medical wards with 59 beds. It is being used as a pharmacy and has 3 storage units for the facility. The structure has also helped to decongest the hospital's Accident and Emergency from admitted medical patients without beds.

The hospital has plans to repurpose the structure to expand its services. The ABT will soon accommodate four departments which include Family Medicine, Medical Outpatient Department, Clinical Psychology and a discharge lounge.

In addition, the DGMAH's ABT structure will also include two units for Onsite Maternity and Birthing, two units for a 24-hour gateway clinic and six units for District Hospital services to expand access.

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