



GAUTENG PROVINCE

HEALTH
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

THURSDAY, 12 OCTOBER 2023

GAUTENG HEALTH ADDRESSES ALLEGATIONS RELATED TO THE DEATH OF A SIX-YEAR-OLD PATIENT AT ITS FACILITY

The Gauteng Department of Health (GDoH) has taken note of allegations that have been made in the media regarding a six-year-old patient who sadly demised while receiving treatment at Odi District Hospital in Mabopane, Tshwane.

First of all, it must be stated that the death of any of our patients irrespective of circumstances or their health condition is something that is always painful given that the primary focus of healthcare workers is to save lives.

The Department once more wishes to convey deep condolences to the Chabalala family for their loss.

The Department would like to put on record the following:

- On Monday, 02 October 2023, Six-year-old Oreratile Chabalala was admitted at Odi District Hospital after presenting with difficulty in breathing and chest pains (the department is unfortunately unable to disclose the patient diagnosis due to patient-doctor confidentiality).
- On Friday, 06 October, the patient's fifth day in admission at around 18h51, the patient's condition worsened. This prompted the clinicians to make a call that the child be transferred to a higher level of care.
- The patient was stabilized and put on ventilator support while awaiting to be transferred to another institution since Odi does not have an Intensive Care Unit (ICU) as a District Hospital.
- A paediatrics ICU bed was made available the following day (07 October) at Dr George Mukhari Academic Hospital (DGMAH) around 14h53.
- An ambulance request to move the patient from Odi to Dr George Mukhari was registered at 15h18 while the child remained on ventilator support. A normal ambulance was available to transport the patient to DGMAH at around 16h00. However, due to the critical condition the patient was in, an ICU ambulance with high care equipment on board had to be dispatched.

- An ICU ambulance that was dropping off another critical patient at Mamelodi Hospital was immediately diverted to Odi at 16h48 and arrived at the district hospital at around 17h15. (CCTV footage at Odi Hospital and the Gauteng Emergency Communication Centre records confirm this fact).
- Due to the unstable condition of the patient, the six-year-old complicated while the hospital and Gauteng Emergency Medical Services (EMS) paramedics were busy with a handover. The child went into cardiac arrest. Resuscitation was initiated on the patient but unfortunately, they could not make it.
- The GDoH has also taken note of misleading information shared through the media which seeks to suggest that there was no available ambulance to transport the patient to DGMAH. This is far from the truth.
- Odi EMS has five (5) intermediate ambulances daily that are sufficient to service emergency calls. The base receives on average 21 emergency calls per shift which the ambulance ratio is sufficient to respond to on time.

The Department will continue to work with multiple stakeholders to strengthen the capacity of its service platforms and to build a greater consensus.

Meanwhile, on the allegation of general EMS response times, attention is drawn to the statement issued on 08 August outlining interventions being made to improve response times. The statement is attached.

Ends/

Issued by the Gauteng Department of Health

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