



GAUTENG PROVINCE

HEALTH
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

MONDAY, 17 JULY 2023

GAUTENG HEALTH CONDUCTS OVER 700 SURGICAL MARATHONS ON MANDELA DAY

The Gauteng Department of Health (GDoH) will on Nelson Mandela Day embark on massive surgical marathons as part of continuous efforts to address surgery backlogs.

Currently, the province has a backlog of over 18 000 patients awaiting surgical procedures. This was reduced from 32 000 at the beginning of the year.

Mandela Day is commemorated annually on 18 July and calls for people to devote 67 minutes of their time to positively impact communities and the lives of people. This year marks 10 years since the death of Nelson Mandela. To commemorate his life the Nelson Mandela Foundation has themed the 10 year remembrance call to action: "The Legacy Lives on Through You".

In response to the call to action, 32 Gauteng hospitals will on Mandela Day conduct over 700 elective surgeries on patients who have been on the waiting list. These patients have been chosen according to surgical backlog lists at every hospital, and incorporates waiting time and prioritisation according to clinical needs.

A number of surgical procedures will be conducted as part of the marathons including arthroplasty, hernia repair, maxillofacial, hysterectomy, cataract excision, prostate biopsy, colostomy closures, caesarean section and circumcision amongst others. Some of the facilities have partnered with the private sector to perform these surgeries.

The surgical marathons are more than just reducing the backlogs, but most importantly, they are about restoring dignity to hundreds of patients whose lives have been impacted by their medical condition.

The clinicians who will be performing these surgeries are specialists in the various disciplines and their teams consisting of registrars, medical

officers, scrub nurses and other support staff including porters and cleaners who are all vital in the success of the surgical marathons.

The GDoH intends to conduct these surgical marathons on a quarterly basis until the backlog is eliminated .

In preparation for these surgical marathons, the GDoH has ensured functional theatres in participating 32 hospitals. Provincial laundry services have also been working around the clock to ensure that there is adequate supply of clean linen at surgical wards on the day.

This major drive to reduce surgery backlogs follows major surgical breakthroughs such as the first heart surgery for Bheki Mlangeni District Hospital, brain surgical procedures at Sebokeng Regional Hospital and the first laparoscopic cholecystectomy for Bertha Gxowa District Hospital.

There has been a concerted effort to also use this opportunity to expand the capacity to perform surgical procedures across various facilities including attending to infrastructural issues and the beatification of the general environment at hospitals.

The MEC for Health and Wellness, Nomantu Nkomo-Ralehoko will on the day visit numerous hospitals to provide support to the various teams performing the surgical procedures.

Members of the media are invited as follows:

Date: Tuesday, 18 July 2023

Time:11:30

Venue: Steve Biko Academic Hospital, Prinshof 349-Jr, Pretoria

Ends/

Issued by the Gauteng Department of Health

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