



**GAUTENG PROVINCE**

HEALTH  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

**SUNDAY, 29 OCTOBER 2023**

### **GAUTENG HEALTH INCREASES RESOURCES FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

The Gauteng Department of Health (GDoH) is currently in the process of implementing a number of interventions to increase resources for mental health which include mental health specialised professionals and rehabilitation services in order to improve access and availability of mental health services in the province.

A number of Gauteng facilities have already been refurbished while others are undergoing refurbishment to ensure an addition of 206 acute mental health beds by the end of the 2023/24 financial year. These hospitals include Bertha Gxowa, South Rand, Tshwane District, Tembisa, Edenvale, Dr George Mukhari and Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospitals. Currently the province has 1 896 acute mental health beds.

As part of efforts to reinforce these interventions, the GDoH on 26 and 27 October held a two-day Mental Health Seminar at the Birchwood Hotel and OR Tambo Conference Centre in Boksburg, under the theme *"Mental Health is a Universal Human Right"*.

Discrimination, harmful stereotypes and stigma in the community, family, schools and the workplace prevent healthy relationships, social interactions and the inclusive environments needed for the well-being of all members of society. Stigma and discrimination continue to be a barrier to social inclusion and access to the right to care.

The Seminar sought to empower civil society, health workers and other stakeholders on raising awareness about mental health, mental illness and promotion of the rights and responsibilities of mental healthcare users. It also aimed at bridging the gap in terms of access to mental health services in the province by ensuring integration of mental health at all levels of care and also availing the required human resources.

In addition, the conference looked at the current increase in the burden of mental health disorders that can be attributed to the socio-economic status of people and a rise in substance abuse.

The GDoH is working with other stakeholders to apply universal preventive measures that reduce the risk of mental ill-health. This includes the promotion of social inclusion policies, support and direct investment for vulnerable groups and investment in communities and young people to reduce crime.

There is also a need to support well-being interventions across the life course from pregnancy, birth, early childhood, early teens, adulthood to older adulthood and to improve the social determinants of health and address mental health stigma and discrimination.

The GDoH has in an effort to strengthen District Health Services, established District Specialist Mental Health Teams (DSMHTs) one per district, Clinical Community Psychiatric Teams (CCPTs) which is simply additional mental health care practitioners and Non-governmental Organisations (NGO) Governance and Compliance Teams (NGCTs) one per district all incorporated into the District Health System.

These three (3) districts based mental health teams, also work with hospitals, Primary Health Care facilities/Clinics, NGOs, non-health government sector (e.g., Department of Social Development) and multiple community-based stakeholders, whose mandate is to provide preventive and interventional mental healthcare. They also provide effective collaborative and supportive interactions with every stakeholder in the mental health fraternity.

Moreover, the Gauteng College of Nursing is addressing the limited graduate output leading to shortage of mental health care practitioners and specialist nurses by advocating for accreditation of the programme. Efforts have already been made to train nurses to fulfil the requirements and meet the imminent mental health care needs.

**Ends/**

**Issued by the Gauteng Department of Health**

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