



PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL  
**CORPORATE COMMUNICATION SERVICES**

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## **LET'S REDUCE LONG QUEUES IN HOSPITALS**

Having to wait for hours to receive medical attention at a hospital can be agitating. Overcrowding and long queues in the outpatient departments in our hospitals is a problem that the Provincial Department of Health is tackling.

The department has introduced the referral system help to help reduce long queues at hospitals and get patients treated quickly and efficiently.

The system is designed to encourage the public to make use of primary health care facilities, like clinics for minor ailments. All our clinics have highly trained nurses and all the medicines are available at clinics. This will ensure that the public gets treatment at a medical facility closest to their place of residence. If there is a need the clinic will refer the patient to a hospital for further treatment. Making use of clinic for minor ailments will alleviate the burden of overcrowding and long queues at hospitals. This system will also ensure that the hospitals focus on treating serious illnesses and injuries. It is also cheaper because clinics are closer to home.

The referral system is divided into different segments, which represent the levels of care.



## **LEVEL 1**

A Primary Health Care Clinic is the first step in the first level of health care. If the clinic cannot help they will refer to a Community Health Centre.

### **Community Health Care**

A Community Health Care Centre still is the second step in the first level of health care but can also be used for the first contact care. The Community Health Centre refers to the local District Hospital when necessary, i.e. KwaMashu Polyclinic.

### **District Hospital**

This is the third step of the first level of health care. These hospitals also receive referrals from the Community Health Centres and Clinics. Most care will be delivered by doctors and primary health care nurses. If the District Hospital cannot help they will refer to the local Regional Hospital for treatment, i.e. Church of Scotland Hospital and Wentworth Hospital.

## **LEVEL 2**

### **Regional Hospital**

This is the second level of health care. Regional Hospitals offer specialist treatment. Patients are referred from District Hospitals. If the Regional Hospital cannot help they will refer to the Provincial Tertiary Hospital, i.e. Ngwelezane Hospital and Benedictine Hospital.

## **LEVEL 3**

### **Provincial Tertiary Hospital**

These hospitals receive referrals from the Regional Hospitals and is the third level of health care. These hospitals are staffed by specialists and generalists. If a Provincial Tertiary Hospital cannot help they will refer to a National Central Hospital. Examples of such institutions are King Edward VIII hospital and Grey's Hospital

## **LEVEL 4**

### **Central Hospitals**

The fourth and highest level of health care. People are referred to these hospitals by Provincial Tertiary Hospitals. These hospitals provide services of high cost in an environment of multi-speciality clinical services.

Inkosi Albert Luthuli Central hospital is an example of such institution.

### **Specialised Hospital**

This is the specialised level of health care and provide care only fro certain specialised groups of patients. These include Chronic psychiatric, Convalescent and TB Hospitals as well as Specialised Spinal Injury and Acute Infectious Disease hospitals. These hospitals include Hillcrest Hospital and Townhill hospital.

The levels of care are aimed at promoting the flow of patients from the most basic level of health care to highly specialised levels. The idea is to reduce bottlenecks at hospitals and to make the public aware of where to go to get the best medical assistance for their illnesses. By following the referral system and these levels of care the patients will not only be assisting in reducing long waiting hours at hospitals, but they will be assist our staff to work efficiently and effectively in their specialized area of care.

ENDS.

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