



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

CORPORATE COMMUNICATION SERVICES

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OMBUDSPERSON DR. LESLEY GUMEDE DIES



The MEC for Health Mrs Peggy Nkonyeni, Superintendent-General Prof. Ronald Green-Thompson together with senior management and staff in the department this morning learnt with shock of the sudden and untimely death of the Health Ombudsperson, Dr. Lesley Gumede. Dr. Gumede collapsed and died late yesterday evening whilst relaxing alone in his house in Pietermaritzburg. Dr Gumede had indicated earlier in the day that he was not feeling well. One of the General Managers in the department, Dr. Lindiwe Simelane found him unconscious, but then it was already late to resuscitate him.

Dr. Gumede joined the department in 2002 in the Emergency Medical Rescue Services, where he worked until his appointment as the Department's Ombudsperson in October last year. His job was to ensure that the department lives up to its mission, values and vision of ensuring that patients get quality care and treatment in public health institutions. It has been his mandate to hear and investigate complaints that are brought to the attention of the department.

The MEC expressed her deepest condolences to the Gumede family on their loss, "In the past two months Dr Gumede would just surprise me as he would be found in all the events that we organise as we visit the communities. Two weeks ago when I had a tyre puncture, I even made use of his vehicle driving with him all the way from Obuka, at Empangeni to Umvoti Toll Plaza. It really is a personal loss. May his Soul rest in peace." The MEC's words were echoed by the Head of Department, Prof Green-Thompson, who said, "We have lost a good man, a committed public servant and a true friend."

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