

20 April 2009

MECs for Health and Education Take Skills Development to another level

Today, the Departments of Health and Education have formalized a partnership in developing the skills of non-clinical (about 40% of the 89000 workforce of the department) staff of the Department of Health in order to ensure that they contribute meaningfully in the delivery of Health Care services in the province.

This landmark occasion was held at the Department of Health's Head Offices in Pietermaritzburg this morning where senior officials (Mr. GE Mkhize of Health and Dr EV Nzama of Education), representing their respective MECs, signed a Memorandum of Collaboration. This programme will target a significant number of the 36000 non-clinical staff of the Department of Health who meet the minimum requirements for FET College entry.

There will be a purposeful target for those who have gone through the department's Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) in order to channel them into career programmes offered by the Further Education and Training (FET) Colleges throughout the province.

Speaking on behalf of the MEC for Education; Dr Nzama said; "We are thankful for the confidence showed by the Department of Health in our FET Colleges. We are positive that this will be a basis of a partnership that is based on mutual commitment, result orientation, on-going communication and able to deliver the expected results and impact in the delivery of quality health care for the people of KwaZulu-Natal."

The partnership was borne out of the need to fast-track skills development of clinical support staff to ensure that they are able to assist in the delivery of care. "Gone are the days when non-clinical staff will feel that they are inferior partners in the delivery of health care. We are driven by the belief that education is a means of promoting good citizenship as well as preparing our staff for the needs of a modern economy and a democratic society. We all want to contribute to the liberation from illiteracy by 2014. We are also building on the achievements in education by aiming to ensure progressive realization of universal access to health care services by all, improving quality and eliminating disparities" said Mr. GE Mkhize of the Department of Health.

The Programme will be available to all categories of non-clinical workers – from a cleaner, a gardener, a sweeper to a clerk – throughout the province. A number of accredited courses in a number of career options will offered – artisan courses (electricians, plumbers, woodwork, etc), Human Resource Management, Financial Management, Office Assistants, courses for Co-operatives, etc - on a block release basis to ensure that people are able to continue working while they develop their education and skills levels at the same time.

ENDS