

Media Statement: The Department of Health welcomes the sentence on a fraud and theft case involving a service provider

17 November 2010

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health welcomes the swift justice meted on Mr. Sibongiseni Gcwensa, of Gcinisa Construction and Cleaning Services, for fraud and theft of more than R650 000 from the department.

Mr. Gcwensa was arrested on Friday following fraudulent payments (13) he received for work he did not do. He was arrested by the Durban's Commercial Crime's Unit and appeared in court yesterday (Monday) where he was granted R5000 bail. Today, he reappeared in the Durban's Commercial Crimes Court and pleaded guilty to charges of fraud and theft. At the time of his arrest he paid back R500 000 to the department and promised to settle the remainder later.

The court today sentenced Mr. Gcwensa to an effective six (6) year suspended sentence and ordered him to pay back the money.

The Department welcomes the speedy administration of justice served by our judicial system on Mr. Gcwensa and believes that it sends a strong message to all those who continue to defraud the state and this department in particular. The department will continue its investigations on the payments received by Mr. Gcwensa totaling around R20 million over a four year period. *"Our Recovery Account is swelling rapidly as we solve these cases one by one. We want to quickly reallocate those resources back to service delivery for provision of public health care and return some to the KZN Treasury coffers where necessary"*

"The Department's resolve and commitment to fighting fraud and corruption is very strong and unyielding, we will pursue his accomplices and work with law enforcement agencies to bring them to justice" says the Chief Finance Officer, Mr. Ndoda Biyela, on hearing about the sentence.

"If they keep stealing or misappropriating public funds, we will keep hunting them down, catching them, bringing them to Justice and sending them to jail" Biyela concluded.

ENDS

ISSUED BY:

**CORPORATE COMMUNICATION
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH: KWAZULU-NATAL**