

Speech by KZN Health MEC, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo on the occasion of the MEC's Annual Service Excellence Awards (MASEA) at the Durban International Convention Centre

2 June 2017

Chairperson of the KZN House of Traditional Leaders - Inkosi Chiliza

Chairperson and Members of the KZN Health Portfolio Committee

HOD Health KZN - Dr Sifiso Mtshali

Senior Managers in the Department of Health

Hospital CEOs and their Management

Community Health Centres' management

Hospital Boards' Chairpersons

Entrants to the MASEA

Health workers across the length and breadth of the Province

Distinguished guests

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is again with deep humility that I request that we bow our heads and observe a moment of silence to pay tribute to all the colleagues who passed on over the past year. In particular, I request that we extend our

prayers to families of the members who passed on as a result of unnatural causes.

In **EThekweni District**, we had:

- Dr Thulani Chocholo, very young Cuban-trained medical doctor, who died after a night out with friends,
- Dr Vajnah Banoo Mohamed, 63 years old; found dead with masking tape around her face at an upmarket complex in Durban North
- Vivian Bongani Maphumulo; a Paramedic who demised at Higginson Highway, whilst transporting a patient to the hospital
- Njabulo Mcwabe, a Professional Nurse, who will be buried tomorrow at Tongaat. He was shot dead whilst sitting in a vehicle belonging to his taxi owner friend

In **Amajuba District**, we had:

- Zanele Dube; a Professional Nurse, stabbed to death by her boyfriend
- Jabulani Ngwenya; an Enrolled Nurse, assaulted and stabbed to death, as well as;
- Njabulo Mncedisi Maseko, an Emergency Care Officer, who perished as result of a car accident

At **ILembe District**, we had:

- Mr. Nkosikhona Brainwell Msomi, also a Paramedic who demised when their Ambulance overturned

At **Ugu District**, we had:

- Dr Mduduzi Alfred Ndlovu from Port Shepstone Hospital who demised in a car accident last month
- Rouse Patrick Martin, a Psychologist who committed suicide
- Sizwe Thabani, an Admin Clerk whose death is still under investigation by Police
- Ms Chili Manози Beauty S.C an Enrolled Nurse who died in a car accident
- Ms Chili Sanele Cosmos , a Professional Nurse, hit by a truck
- Ms Gasa Promise, an Enrolled Nurse who demised as a result of a Car accident
- Khumalo Sithembile Yvonne, a Professional Nurse, murdered by her spouse

At **Harry Gwala District**, we had:

- Nokukhanya Ngwadi; a Data Capturer, who demised as result of a bus accident

At **UMkhanyakude District**, we had:

- Bongekile Nqobile Mngomezulu; a Professional Nurse, shot and killed by her husband who also killed himself
- Benamile Mbali Mntungwa, a Staff Nurse, also killed by her boyfriend

At **UMgungundlovu District**, we had:

- Sr Ntokozo Millicent Ndlovu, gunned down at her home at Grange just as she was arriving from night duty at Greys Hospital
- Sr Thabisile Doyisa, gunned down in her own home in Naperville
- Sr Sindisiwe Shelembe, also from Grey's Hospital, who too was shot dead wearing her nurse's uniform while on her way to work
- Mrs. Bonakele Kapile, an Enrolled Nurse in the process of bridging to Professional Nurse who died as a result of a vehicle accident;
- Dr Pretorius, an Anesthetist who served at Northdale Hospital – she died after sustaining heavy injuries in a horse riding accident.

Along those of us that departed, I request that we put in prayer the alarming number of children and young girls that have been raped, maimed and murdered in this province. As health care workers, whether in Clinics; Thuthuzela Crises Centres or Mortuaries, I know these type of cruel incidents also greatly affect you.

To all of us, I then say – take heed of what the poet, **Marcel Proust** advised, when he pronounced:

'We say that the hour of death cannot be forecast –

It never occurs to us that it has any connection with the day already begun...'

We then request Reverend Shangase to put us all in the prayer

Colleagues, we have all been chosen to provide support and physical healing both to the patients and their families.

Indeed, families become happy when their member recuperates but they also readily accept demise if their member was treated with care whilst in a health institution and they would be heard saying:

My mother passed away in that hospital but the way she was treated – we were comforted as a family

If not treated well; they would be heard saying:

My sister was discharged from that hospital but I will not recommend that hospital even to my worst enemy

I need to emphasise that when we treat people in their physical pain, they get better including their families emotionally. We always need to bear in mind that a patient is not just a simple insignificant FEVER CHART, but:

- *A mother or father to someone*
- *Grandma/ pa to someone*
- *Brother/ sister to someone*

Crucial here is the issue of STAFF ATTITUDE. If we can improve on this aspect; not only will the service on patients improve – GOD will also be happy with our performance

Families that have been comforted when their loved had life threatening illnesses, recover better and faster from grief after losing that family member.

I have personally received well wishes and blessings from South Africans who say I assisted them during their difficult times. I so wish all of us as health care workers can strive for that.

On this glorious evening, I need to indicate that I don't take light the stressful work that you do and consider it appropriate that you should get a little commendation from us who supervise you.

Two weeks ago I visited 2 clinics at Umlazi and I found Professional Nurses in consulting room at 11h00 who had not had a tea break but had just a bottle of water to drink - hard working nurses.

I also visited Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Hospital the other time and found in a female medical ward with 62 patients, 3 nurses, Professional Nurses giving medicines; Enrolled Nurses giving injections. Enrolled Nurses Assistant were also assisting with feedings of critically ill patients, in between to answering telephones and also attending to their general tasks.

Indeed, I concede, together with HOD and management, we need to improve that situation. We must find a way to improve the filling of vacancies.

Amidst all the constraints faced; we thank all of you for the enormous progress made in bettering the health status of our citizens.

If you can permit me; I would like to highlight some of the outstanding achievements this Province has been able to pull through, starting with the successful implementation and near conclusion of the phase 1 of the National Health Insurance piloting phase.

Standing out above the rest of other Provinces, is the good progress in the implementation of the Central Chronic Medicine Dispensing and Distribution (**CCMDD**) programme which has seen us enrolling more than 600 000 patients to date. Other ten [10] provinces combined do not even account for 500 000 enrolled patients.

We have also implemented the e-PHC systems through the installation of the Health Patient Record Management Systems (HPRS) in all the three (3) NHI Pilot Districts which has seen us capturing demographic and clinical information of over 800 000 patients. Indeed that has gone a long way in responding appropriately to the concerns raised by the Auditor General regarding patients' files not being kept in the clinics which has previously exposed the department to litigation.

Most importantly, we have also made it possible for our patients at primary health care level to access the health resources that are in the private health sector space. Here we pride ourselves for having contracted 89 private General Practitioners (GPs) in the NHI Pilot Districts as well as deployment of 109 Pharmacy Assistants to work in the public health and 89 private pick-up- points/collection points.

All these innovations have not gone unnoticed; our people are very appreciative; thanks to you dedication.

Allow me to also single out strides made in the fight against HIV and AIDS. Here we profusely thank our NIMAART trained nurses who made it possible for us to enrol more than 1, 2 million patients on the antiretroviral programme. Their good work is well documented in the book that was launched during the 2016 International Aids Conference in this venue.

You have also made us proud in attaining the highest accolades in the realisation of the 'IDEAL CLINICS' CONCEPT which indeed has made this Province, on behalf of its patient, to improve the health care standards.

We are very proud of the fact that of the 10 best performing clinics which scored over 80% in the country; 6 are in KwaZulu Natal. Over and above that, none of the clinics in KZN are reported among the lowest performing clinics – that is below 20%.

We also pride ourselves for successfully carrying out one of the most difficult surgical operations that resulted into separation of the conjoined twins early this year at Inkosi Albert Luthuli Central Hospital. Thanks to the 25 strong team consisting of Neonatologists; Paediatric Surgeons; Cardiothoracic Surgeons; Cardiologist; Anaesthesia; Plastic Surgeons; Nursing staff and Theatre staff – the babies and the mom are healthy and alive – they were all discharged last week.

Lastly, allow me to single out management and personnel of all the institutions that provide specialised mental health care to the designated patients. Thank you for ensuring that our Province does not get

entangled in the Esidimeni - like debacle. I should actually state that I personally did a loco inspection of almost all of our Specialised Mental Health Care and was quite impressed by the quality of care being provided. Keep it up.

Tonight is then an evening where we say thank you to all those that went an extra mile to ensure that our patients get a better service. It is also an occasion that is intended to inspire those that don't get awarded tonight – to also strive to be worthy recipients, next time around.

We all can do better if we follow Martin Luther King's advice, who said:

'If I cannot do great things, I can do small things in a great way.'

I thank you