

Portfolio Committee on Health Seeks Clarity on Dr Lekalakala's leave and Appointment as HOD

The North West Provincial Legislature's Portfolio Committee on Health and Social Development will today, write to the MEC for Health to get clarity on the leave of the Health HOD Dr Thabo Lekalakala; and to the Director General and Minister of Health to confirm whether Dr Lekalakala was ever a Chief Director there as stated in the z83 form when he applied for the post.

Acting Health HOD Vuyo Mbulawa reported to the Committee that the MEC for Health Dr Masike, had requested Dr Lekalakala to take his annual leave while all issues raised against him are being investigated by the Director General of the province, Dr Lydia Sebegoe.

The Committee had requested the department to come and present the final draft of the Annual Performance Plan (APP); to brief the Committee on the appointment of Dr Lekalakala as a Head of the Department of Health; and the strike that employees (NEHAWU members) of the department are embarking on.

On the issue of the APP, the department had not submitted the APP to the Auditor General (AG) and therefore the Committee felt that it could only attend to it after the AG has seen it. On the issue of the strike, Mr Mbulawa told the Committee that NEHAWU was demanding the following; the suspension of the HOD (Dr Lekalakala); Payment of performance bonus; Appointment of employees in acting positions should be reviewed; all vacant posts to be filled; and termination of contracts of Marang, Mediosa, Buthelezi and High Care.

Committee Chairperson Madoda Sambatha said there is Prima-facie evidence of wrongdoing on the side of the HOD, that is why NEHAWU is demanding his suspension."State coffers have been looted in front of their eyes. Ordinary people are suffering because of this.

"The strike must be quickly resolved so that tomorrow there is no claim that workers stopped medication from being delivered. Make sure you also negotiate a safe passage of medical equipment to go to the depo, hospitals and clinics," said Hon. Sambatha.

On the issue of Dr Lekalakala's appointment, the Committee pointed out to the department that Dr Lekalakala was never a Chief Director at National Department of Health as claimed in the z83 form that the Committee is in possession of. This came after the department was asked to present the

requirements of the post as advertised in 2014. The requirements stipulated that the candidate, must among others, have been a Chief Director for more than 5 years.

“I have confirmed with the Director General and the Minister of Health who stated clearly that Dr Lekalakala was a Director at the department, he was never a Chief Director.

“We are now requesting them to confirm it in writing so we can take this up,” said Hon. Sambatha.

The Chief Financial Officer, Ms Bertha Maleka, was asked to confirm what is left on the budget for ARVs as the department had admitted in the previous meeting that they used it to pay Buthelezi ambulances and High Care. The CFO said the department is currently having a budget of R8. 1m, a figure which the Committee is disputing.

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