



health

Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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MEDIA STATEMENT ON DRUG STOCKOUTS IN LIMPOPO

Over the past few weeks there has been reports and discussions in the media about drug stockouts, especially in Limpopo. At issue is the new pharmaceutical warehouse management system, whether it works, and whether it is the system that is able to solve the challenges at hand.

A meeting between the Premier of Limpopo, the Minister of Health and the Limpopo MECs for Health and Treasury was held in Limpopo this morning to discuss the issue and come up with a way forward.

The political leaders also met officials from the national Department of Health, Limpopo Department of Health, Limpopo Treasury and depot officials and instructed them on the way forward.

BACKGROUND

The Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA) performed the country's first ever performance audit of the management of pharmaceuticals at provincial departments of health throughout the country, starting in 2011. The audit took five years to complete and found that the country had 10 medicals depots, one in each province and two in the Eastern Cape.

The 10 depots were using four different electronic systems to manage stock and make sure that hospitals and clinics have enough supplies.

- The MEDSAS System (Western Cape, Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Free State and Gauteng)
- PDSX (Limpopo and Mpumalanga)
- NOOTRODEPO (Northern Cape)
- BCSX Oracle (North West)

The AGSA found that all these systems were obsolete and problematic and recommended that a new system be found. A meeting was then called between all provincial departments of health and National Treasury. It was envisaged that National Treasury would assist the Department of Health to procure a new, uniform system that would be used by all provinces rather than different systems.

The National Treasury then decided that there will be no need to procure any system because they had already commissioned the design of a new system that will be owned by the State. This system was called Intenda Warehouse Management System now called G- Commerce.

The system was piloted in the Northern Cape in March 2017 where, as expected, it experienced a lot of teething technical problems which have been resolved. Implementation is ongoing and where problems are identified, they are resolved.

The meetings that took place today resolved that we have to continue with the system and that whatever challenges encountered will be dealt with.

The national Department of Health will dispatch a six-person team, three full time and another three shuttling between Limpopo and the Northern Cape to support both provinces. The head of this team will report directly to the Minister of Health and the MEC for Health in Limpopo.

A technical team comprising of national Department of Health, Limpopo Department of Health and Limpopo Provincial Treasury has been established to be at hand in case any problems need to be resolved and to brief the Minister of Health and the MEC regularly.

We believe that the system can work anywhere in the country, hence the support teams which we have put in place.

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For more information, please contact

Popo Maja: Spokesperson for the Ministry of Health

Mobile: 072 585 3219/082 373 1169

E-mail: popo.maja@health.gov.za