

Media Statement

To: Editors & Health Journalists

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Ministry of Health has expressed disappointment and distress by the none payment of doctors

The Minister of Health is disappointed and highly distressed to learn that some intern and community service doctors who started work in January have not been paid up until now.

When this problem came to the fore, the Minister understood that the association representing the doctors, SAMA and respective administrations in provinces where this problem manifested itself have been meeting to resolve the matter speedily and that by 7th of February 2019 the matter would have been settled. The 7th of February is a week after they should have been paid. Being paid a week later than expected is by itself not acceptable.

It is very difficult for the Ministry to fathom what difficulty could managers encounter that would lead to non-payment of a salary.

On 9th of December 2018, the Ministry issued a statement about the stimulus package and employment of health professionals. On 12th December 2018, the Ministry issued another statement which was about the first entrant health workers (internship and community service).

These statements were issued after a two-day intense discussion about the issue of human resources for Health at the National Health Council with all the MECs and HODs.

The statement was issued in agreement with everybody that all the relevant HR issues be resolved. What was left was for each province to capture each individual doctor on their respective persal systems where all the other public servants working in provinces are captured. Every single HR section of a province know that for a person to be paid at the end of a month their full details must be on persal latest by the 15th of that month. Provinces have been paying public servants their salaries for decades and there is nothing new in that.

It is for these reasons that it is puzzling and extremely distressing for something like a payment of a salary to suddenly become a big problem. It was further disconcerting to learn that even a promise to fix whatever administrative cliché may have occurred by 7th of February still came up with problems.

There is now a new date set for Monday 11th February for payment of doctors.

Motsoaledi said that “I am calling on the very few provinces who have not yet finalised this very simple task of paying somebody their well-deserved salary to make sure that no intolerable excuse is forwarded to the affected health workers on the 11th.”

“Working flat-out on over this weekend to resolve and ensure that payment is effected on Monday, 11 February is a necessary task that must be performed – it must not be regarded as a favour to health workers”.

The Ministry is further calling on all Premiers of affected provinces to take interest in this matter and check what could be happening in their administrations.

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Issued by: Ministry of Health

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