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Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



GAUTENG PROVINCE

HEALTH
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT ON THE REOPENING OF THE CHARLOTTE MAXEKE JOHANNESBURG ACADEMIC HOSPITAL'S ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY UNIT

MONDAY, 09 MAY 2022

Thank You Facilitator

Greetings to the Health MEC, Dr Nomathemba Mokgethi

Colleague and the Deputy Minister, Dr Dhlomo

Acting MEC for Department of Infrastructure Development and Property Management, Mr Jacob Mamabolo

Representatives from the Donors and implementing Agents

Project and Clinical Managers

Members of the Media

Today we meet again to provide update as per the undertaking we made late in March this year in terms of our phased-in approach, that the Accident and Emergency Unit will be ready by the end of April 2022.

I am aware that some people may say we did not meet our deadline hence we only announce today, but the fact of the matter is, the unit was ready in terms of the timeframes we announced, unfortunately due to other competing commitments, we were not immediately available to make this important announcement.

However, our unavailability did not stop service delivery because the process of gradual transfer of patients from other facilities to this hospital, has been going smoothly since the beginning of this month. Of course this also meant even staff members, especially those who were temporarily transferred to other hospitals had to gradually return to their permanent workplace.

The first group of patients moved in on the 04 May 2022 mostly from Helen Joseph Hospital Emergency Department, and as of today the total number of 15 patients has been transferred. They are also Mental Health / Psychiatry patients who were awaiting admission.

Patients that were brought in was through pre-arranged transfer from one facility to another. It is important that we emphasise that the opening of the Accident and Emergency Units is being done in a phased-in approach so as to not overwhelm the system.

This process is unfolding as follows:

- NO ambulances or walk-in patients allowed in the A&E areas currently;
- The first lot of patients started being moved to the facility this past week as part of inter facility pre-arranged transfer;
- The process is led by our capable team of clinicians to ensure that patient care is not compromised, together with staff needs;
- The contractor has been working on the CT Scan since last week and has made significant progress. The last components that were awaited arrived in the county this morning and they should be able

to install those and recalibrate the CT Scan. This will allow the A&E Units to start receiving ambulances.

- It is important to indicate that the CT Scan machine is critical to the full operation of the A&E Units given that trauma and adult emergency patients that present with life threatening conditions (eg acute stroke, stabbed chest, head injuries, gun shots, etc.) are time dependent and cannot be send to another hospital.

Once more I need to emphasise that the Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital remedial work project is a multi-phase, multi-year project that will be carried out on the hospital in its entirety. Work has been completed on the Radiation Oncology building and now in the Accident and Emergency Department.

The Accident and Emergency Department is located in Block 1 Level 6. Work will begin soon on the rest of Block 1 and will proceed in a staged approach through the rest of the hospital.

The hospital has received the necessary Occupational Health Safety approvals and certificates from the City of Johannesburg for the Accident and Emergency Department, and the area can now be recommissioned for patient care.

The recommissioning of this unit is a key milestone, and we are pleased that the hospital will be able to relieve pressure from surrounding hospitals and community healthcare centres, who have had to take in more patients since the closure of this facility last year.

We are extremely grateful to the Solidarity Fund who sponsored the work done in the Accident and Emergency and the Spire Fund for implementing the project which costed about R68 million.

In terms of the remaining work, the engineering team of my Department conducted a block-by-block assessment for the entire institution and they have developed a detailed project plan covering the milestones as indicated by the table below:

REMEDIAL WORK FOR THE BLOCKS	EXPECTED DATE OF COMPLETION
Emergency Unit	April 2022
Block 1 - Obstetrics & Gynaecology	March 2023
Block 2 - Paediatrics	July 2023
Block 3 - Surgery	October 2023
Block 4 & 5 - Internal Medicine	November 2023

All the equipment and machines have been installed in the Accident and Emergency unit, while work on the CT Scan is being completed. The process to relocate patients from surrounding facilities, especially at Helen Joseph Hospital has begun in earnest.

It should also be noted that, even though the Accident and Emergency Unit will be commissioned, as a Central, Quaternary, Academic Hospital, the facility will be admitting priority 1 and 2 patients and will not be open for walk-in patients at the current moment.

Thus, the public is urged not to present at the hospital, but instead continue to use local healthcare facilities or call Emergency Medicine / Ambulance Services in case of an emergency on 10177. The unit will, for now, only with transferrals from other facilities.

The work on other sections of the hospital is underway, and we are hopeful that the team will continue to work with diligence and resolve to ensure that this key healthcare facility is returned to full functionality. The hospital is functioning albeit reduced capacity. Just under 800 patients are currently receiving care at the facility. We will keep the public and media abreast of the developments.

We also wish to express gratitude to all the sponsors and partners that are involved in returning the facility to full functionality, namely the Solidarity Fund, Spire Fund and Gift of the Givers. We also thank patients, their families and the people of Gauteng for understanding and excising patience while the work to rehabilitate the hospital is ongoing.

I thank you