

MEDIA STATEMENT

To: Editors & Health Journalists
Issued by: Department of Health
Date: Tuesday, 07 July 2026

Health Department Concludes 2026 Midyear Medical Internship and Community Service Placement Cycle

Pretoria: The Department of Health is pleased to announce the successful conclusion of the 2026 Midyear Medical Internship and Community Service Placement Cycle. The midyear placement cycle provides an opportunity for eligible health professionals to commence their statutory Medical Internship or Community Service during the second half of the year.

The placement process was administered through the Internship and Community Service Programme (ICSP) online system and was guided by the principles of fairness, transparency, and equity, while prioritising eligible South African citizens and permanent residents who were available to commence duty on 1 July 2026 in funded posts across the country.

The Department is pleased to confirm that all eligible South African citizens and permanent residents who were available to commence duty on 1 July 2026 have been successfully placed. This includes 161 Medical Interns and 464 Community Service practitioners (including 239 Medical Doctors and 30 Professional Nurses) across 16 professional categories. These applicants have been duly notified of their placement outcomes through the ICSP online system, and the employment contracting process has commenced.

Unfortunately, a total of 77 applicants (24 Medical Interns and 53 Community Service practitioners) declined their placements through the Internship and Community Service Programme (ICSP), citing personal reasons. The Department of Health is concerned by the number of applicants who have rejected placements, particularly where the reasons relate to a reluctance to serve in rural and underserved areas.

The Department emphasises that the Medical Internship and Community Service placement process is guided by the availability of funded posts and the healthcare needs of the country. Provincial Departments of Health go into great lengths to ensure that statutory posts are funded despite current fiscal constraints. The determination of posts is informed by the founding principles of Community Service, being redistribution of workforce across the country. This is especially with Community Services Policy that was developed specifically for that purpose.

Rural placements remain essential to ensuring equitable access to healthcare services and strengthening service delivery in underserved communities. The decline or no-show at these facilities does not only affect the ICSP but denies the communities of

the much needed healthcare services ought to be provided by these Health Care Practitioners (HCPs).

The successful implementation of the 2026 Midyear Placement Cycle reflects the Department's ongoing commitment to strengthening the health workforce and expanding employment opportunities for newly qualified health professionals. The programme not only provides eligible applicants with the opportunity to fulfil their statutory Medical Internship and Community Service obligations but also contributes to strengthening the public health system by increasing the availability of skilled healthcare professionals to meet the growing demand for quality healthcare services across the country.

The Department of Health extends its sincere appreciation to the Provincial Departments of Health, the relevant statutory councils, higher education institutions, and all stakeholders for their continued collaboration and commitment throughout the placement process. Their partnership has been instrumental in ensuring the successful implementation of the 2026 Midyear Medical Internship and Community Service Placement Cycle.

For more information and media enquiries, please contact:

Mr Foster Mohale
Departmental Spokesperson
072 432 3792
Foster.mohale@health.gov.za

Mr Sello Lediga
Health Ministry Spokesperson
082 353 9859
Sello.Lediga@health.gov.za