

Keynote Address by MEC for Health Dr Phophi Ramathuba during the launch of #Office Must Fall Campaign, Letaba Hospital, 09 April 2018

HOD Dr Kgaphole

Executive Management of the Department

Departmental officials from all ranks

Ladies and gentlemen

Members of the media

Good morning

Programme Director, the right to health, education, housing and securing are some of the rights which our forefathers and mothers have fought and compromised their lives for. These basic human rights were first outlined in the Freedom Charter and later on in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa's Bill of Right.

The Freedom Charter's vision on health was that: "A preventive health scheme shall be run by the state. Free medical care and hospitalisation shall be provided for all, with special care for mothers and young children. On the other hand the Constitution of the country says this about health: Everyone has a right to access to healthcare services, including reproductive health.

As the ANC, the country and the world celebrate 100 year of Nelson Mandela, as government we need to ensure that we provide quality healthcare to our people for Tata Madiba. Our people should celebrate the 100 years of Mandela through the legacies which he has left for them. We need to move away to a period wherein our people lament about the poor services we are delivering to them.

It should be noted that 86% of the people of South African rely on our public healthcare facilities for their good health. We must provide quality healthcare to

ensure that Tata Madiba is proud that the health of his people is in the good hands.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have gathered here today, a day before we deliver the Departmental Budget for the 2018/19 Financial Year. We have gathered here in order to turnaround our operations.

We have gathered here to shift from the tradition Management-through-telephone, which is a hands-off approach to facility-based approached. We have gathered here to launch the #Offices Must Fall campaign.

This campaign will see all our executive managers starting with the Head of the Department going to our healthcare facilities. They should leave the comfort of their air- conditioned and well-furnished offices to fight the battle against the diseases. The diseases are not in the offices, instead they are at our healthcare facilities.

We can no longer afford a situation wherein we are told about the shortage of food and medication by the members of the media of external stakeholders. We should be the first to know and rectify the situation immediately. From now moving forward we do not expect to be informed about our own situation at our facilities by outside stakeholders, this must end today.

Programme Director, we have established the MEC Intervention Team in this regard to ensure that the situation improves at a high pace. We have established partnership with Wits Consortium to assist in mentoring our management with clinical governance and leadership programmes.

In order to achieve this difficult task, we need to be guided by Thomas Sankara's words when he said: "You cannot carry out fundamental change without a certain amount of madness. In this case, it comes from nonconformity, the courage to turn your back on the old formulas, the courage to invent the future. It took the madmen of yesterday for us to be able to act with extreme clarity today. I want to be one of those madmen. We must dare to invent the future".

Thank you