



MINISTRY
PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Deputy Minister Stakeholder Engagement Emalahleni Local
Municipality, Nkangala District,
Mpumalanga Province,
22 November 2023**

Theme: *Promoting Innovative Ideas for Service Delivery – Leave No One Behind*

Acting Executive Mayor, Cllr. MB Hlumbane

Acting Speaker: Cllr. SS Buthelezi

Chief Whip, Cllr. CP Maseko

Cllr. SS Buthelezi

MPAC Chair, CL Maraba

DPSA Chief Director, Mr. E. Kgomo

Representative of Academics (Education) - Mr. A. Usinga

**Representative of Business (Chamber of Commerce) Mr. A.
Mgudlwa**

Representative of Professionals (Medical Doctor) Dr. N.S Mtembu

ALL Councillors present here today.

Ladies and gentlemen

Today we gather here for a crucial engagement to discuss the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) process and the future of service delivery in the Emalahleni Local Municipality. I have had the opportunity to review the 2023/24 IDP document, which outlines the municipality's plans for the coming years.

I am expecting that extensive consultations have taken place to develop this plan, as required by our Constitution and Laws and that the vision and objectives of the IDP have been carefully considered, taking your input as critical stakeholders into consideration.

Our purpose today is not only to fulfil legal obligations but also to genuinely listen to your feedback on the municipality's progress and challenges. Together, we aim to overcome obstacles and work towards the vision set by the National Development Plan and translated to the IDP for the ELM.

While there have undoubtedly been achievements since the implementation of the IDP in 2022, our focus today is on areas that require improvement. We need to adopt an integrated service delivery approach, aligning with the District Development Model (DDM).

Two issues raised by the Honourable Nkalitshana in the foreword of the 2023/24 IDP deeply concern me. The first issue is the low rate of payment for municipal services, which currently stands at 60%. This low collection rate directly affects the provision of basic services, as there is a lack of financial resources.

The second issue is the self-sabotage and acts that undermine the government's efforts to deliver services and infrastructure. These acts include cable theft, illegal connections of electricity or water, and the burning of public facilities such as schools and libraries. We must address these destructive behaviours urgently.

While we understand the challenges faced by our communities, such as high unemployment rates, it is crucial that we collectively address these self-destructive actions. We need to protect our assets and the future of our children by reporting those who engage in such acts and working together as communities.

Today's engagement is not about preaching but rather about listening and discussing how we can realize the vision outlined in the IDP, ensuring a better life for all and a brighter future for our children.

Let me express my gratitude to all the stakeholders present, including community leaders, healthcare professionals, government officials, and members of the public. Your participation and commitment to improving service delivery are essential for the betterment of our community.

Program Director, let me share the findings from a recent "Service Delivery Site Assessment at the eMalahleni Hospital."

The purpose of this assessment was to evaluate the delivery of public services and identify areas that require improvement.

During the assessment, we examined various aspects of the hospital's operations, including the services rendered, the challenges faced, and the effectiveness of the complaints management system. The findings shed light on both commendable aspects and areas that require our immediate attention.

Firstly, the services provided by the hospital are extensive and cover a wide range of healthcare needs. These services include allied health services, clinical care services, nursing services, radiography, outpatient services, and many others. The dedication of the staff members in delivering these services is commendable, and their willingness to help at all times is highly appreciated.

However, we also discovered several challenges that hinder the hospital's ability to provide efficient and effective care. One of the major issues identified is the high number of walk-in patients. While the hospital is primarily designed to operate on referrals, the influx of walk-ins disrupts its unique services. As a result, there is a high demand for services, leading to a shortage of beds and a heavy dependency on agency staff. This situation compromises the quality of care provided and puts a strain on healthcare professionals.

Furthermore, we found that some local communities still face challenges in accessing healthcare services, as they must travel long distances. While the hospital is accessible through public transport, we must work towards ensuring that all members of our community have easy access to the healthcare they need.

In terms of the complaints management system, we observed that there is a policy and procedure in place to address complaints. However, citizens have not lodged many complaints yet, indicating a need for greater awareness and encouragement for service recipients to provide feedback. We must create a culture of open communication and

accountability, where citizens feel empowered to voice their concerns and experiences.

Additionally, the assessment highlighted the importance of governance, management, and resources in ensuring effective service delivery. The presence of a complaints manager and a dedicated team of quality improvement shows a commitment to addressing issues and improving the system. However, we must ensure that the necessary resources are available to implement the complaints management policy and procedure effectively.

During my visit, I also had the opportunity to interact with the staff members and witness their dedication firsthand. I commend their efforts and resilience in providing care under challenging circumstances. However, there are areas where additional support is required, such as addressing the shortage of staff and improving the recruitment process.

Based on the findings of this assessment, there is room for improvement in the delivery of public services at the Witbank Tertiary Hospital. Our commitment to the well-being of our community requires us to take immediate action and implement necessary changes. This includes addressing the challenges identified, improving access to healthcare services, and enhancing the complaints management system.

I encourage all stakeholders present here today to actively participate in the discussion and provide valuable insights and recommendations. Together, we can work towards creating a healthcare system that is accessible, efficient, and responsive to the needs of our community.

In closing, I would like to express my gratitude to the healthcare professionals, administrators, and staff members who work tirelessly to provide care and support to our community. Your dedication and commitment to service delivery are commendable. Let us join hands and work collaboratively to build a healthcare system that meets the needs of every individual in the eMalahleni Local Municipality.

Thank you.