

EASTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE

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Attention: MEC for Health
East Cape Provincial Legislature

Dear MEC

Re: Transfer of ambulances from Motherwell to Dora Nginza EMS centre

On recent oversight visits in Motherwell, it was shocking to note that all ambulances there were originally based at the Motherwell Community Health Centre, have now been moved to the EMS unit at the Dora Nginza hospital.

The impact of this decision has been very negative. According to several medical practitioners and EMS personnel, several patients PER WEEK have died while waiting for ambulances to arrive. These deaths, according to them, could all have been avoided had the ambulances been closer at hand. In other words, these deaths were unnecessary.

In order for an ambulance service to effectively serve the metro, it is logical that the service have bases in several strategic areas throughout the metro. Ambulances cannot all be concentrated around one hospital, particularly when Dora Nginza is situated in an area where heavy traffic congestion is the norm.

Is there a plan to set up satellite EMS stations around the metro? If so, what is the plan and where will the satellite stations be situated? Will Motherwell benefit from an EMS station?

The continued failure of the EMS service to reach patients in good time will lead to further medico-legal claims against the department of Health, which should be avoided at all costs. I look forward to hearing how the department intends to increase the number of functional ambulances in the province, and to improve the accessibility of ambulances with a view to dramatically reducing the waiting time for patients.

I look forward to hearing from you in this regard.

Yours in health,

Hon Jane Cowley