

# EASTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE

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**Attention:** The MEC for Health, Hon Gomba

Dear Hon Gomba

**Re: Stronger approach required to curb medico-legal claims against Department of Health**

I hope this finds you well. I write this letter to express my grave concern that the contingent liability carried by the Department of Health in the Eastern Cape was over the past year increased by a further 21%, despite steps taken to curb opportunities for medico-legal claims against it.

Unless this contingent liability is drastically reduced, the Department of Health is in grave danger of collapsing, as the current contingent liability is now R4 billion greater than the entire allocation for Health for the year.

I would urge you to take far more drastic steps against those officials and employees within the health sector who expose the department to such high risk and that you start initiating harsh and permanent consequences for those caught either supplying unscrupulous lawyers with medical records, or employees leaking information, or even fabricating false cases in cahoots with others.

Furthermore, I would also urge that professionalism becomes the norm and not the exception, which is currently the case in most clinics and hospitals. Unprofessional behaviour in the health sector can quite literally lead to deaths and must be dealt with harshly.

I believe that you are very committed to bringing about the necessary changes that would turn the tide of medico-legal claims against the Department of Health and therefore urge you take bolder steps. I look forward to seeing them implemented.

Yours Sincerely,

Jane Cowley

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane Cowley'.