

Minister Mkhize, you took an oath to protect our people

By Lindy Wilson MP – DA Shadow Deputy Minister of Health

Every person in this house took a solemn oath to protect the Constitution and in doing so, all the people of South Africa.

It is beyond comprehension therefore, that Members of this House, particularly from the ANC benches can come before us and say that they find this report and budget acceptable.

It is not acceptable!

It severely impacts on the health and wellbeing of every citizen in this country, particularly the poor and vulnerable.

The PPE corruption and in particular the inadequate storage of PPE supplies and purchasing of PPE equipment that did not meet standards to protect our front-line workers from Covid, has potentially resulted in the loss of lives of many health care workers who worked tirelessly to save the lives of others.

This is not acceptable!

The Compensation of Employees was reduced by 12%, which has resulted in reductions across all Programmes. Hospitals and clinics are already seriously understaffed and unable to assist the sick and vulnerable and we are advised that the budget cuts are going to result in loss of staffing and inability to employ further staff at a time when there is a crisis.

This is not acceptable!

The grants for construction and refurbishment have been reduced by R107 million. Refurbishment projects, construction on an academic hospital and the maintenance of facilities, that are already in a horrific condition in many areas have been put on hold. Machinery and equipment so desperately needed in some area, will not be purchased – leaving the sick and vulnerable in an even more precarious position.

This is not acceptable!

In some provinces, a single ambulance is required to cover an area of up to 20 000 square kilometres. This results in victims in need of emergency care waiting, and even dying, as ambulances (if equipped and manned) take hours to get to them to assist.

This is not acceptable!

The arrival of the 3rd Covid-19 wave is here, and sadly people are dying on a daily basis. But our vaccination programme has been an absolute disaster marred by a slow start to purchase

vaccines and then hold-ups on a regular basis. Half of the frontline workers are yet to be vaccinated. The citizens of South Africa have been left in the dark and now are abandoned in the cold as another tsunami is fast approaching.

This is unacceptable!

Minister, no person in this house with a conscience, and who took an oath to protect both the Constitution and our citizens can say this report and budget is acceptable. It cannot be.

Unless of course, they really do not care about the poor and vulnerable in South Africa, which appears to be closer to the truth.

And that is unacceptable!

Cry the Beloved Country.