



GAUTENG PROVINCE

HEALTH
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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RESPONSE TO LEGISLATURE QUESTION 5.HL114

Northmead Clinic in Benoni is a flagship provincial clinic offering primary healthcare services as well as Specialised support and allied health services. It is open five days a week from 07:30 to 16:00 and sees, on average, 3 000 patients a month, but has severe constraints in terms of space, consulting rooms and staff allocations. There are only 10 nurses, one doctor and a part-time Health Promoter permanently employed. All clerical, garden and security staff are EPWP staff on annual contracts. There is ample space to expand the clinic and a detailed expansion plan was submitted to the Gauteng Department of Health in 2024. Will the MEC indicate:

- (i) When will the expansion plans suggested by the Clinic Sister in Charge be considered for implementation, given that there is provincially owned land within the clinic grounds that could be utilised to accommodate the expansion plans;**

Response

The need was identified to extend the existing Northmead Clinic in 2015. The project was put on hold in 2019 with other projects due to budget constraints. The extension of Northmead Clinic was planned to be implemented in 2015. The request for service was sent to the Gauteng Department of Infrastructure Development (DID) in June 2015. DID appointed Professional Service Providers to implement the planning of the clinic. Due to the need to comply with the Infrastructure Unit Support Systems (IUSS) norms and standards, the need was identified to completely build a new clinic. The business case was submitted to Central Office on 15 April 2021. Due to budget constraints the plans were put on hold. The projects are still on hold because of limited funding.

- (ii) There is no digitisation of files on site. All patient files are paper based and kept in filing cabinets or boxes and must preferably be stored on site for at least five years. When will the digitisation of patient files and**

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the Department's one-patient, one-file approach become a reality at Northmead Clinic;

Response

Digitisation of files

The Department of Health is implementing patient-record digitisation in phases to support effective roll-out and optimal use of available resources. Phase 1 focuses on digitising patient records at hospitals. This phase is currently under way and progressing well. The Department has successfully enabled 26 hospitals, with the remaining hospitals still in progress.

Phase 2 will focus on digitising Community Health Centres (CHCs). The required Supply Chain Management processes, including the Bid Specification Committee process, have been completed, and the project scope, requirements and business specifications have been submitted to Supply Chain Management. The appointment of a suitable service provider is currently under way.

Phase 3 will extend the digitisation programme to Primary Health Care (PHC) facilities, subject to funding availability. As Northmead Clinic is a PHC facility, implementation of the Department's digitisation programme, including the one-patient, one-file approach, will take place during this phase once the required budget has been secured.

One Patient, One File

The Department has successfully integrated the SAP Health Information System (HIS) with the Picture Archiving and Communication System (PACS). To date, the Integrated HIS project has delivered the Patient Administration, Billing and Finance modules to 33 CHCs and 37 hospitals. On registration in SAP HIS, each patient is allocated a unique identifier known as the Patient Master Index (PMI) number. The PMI uniquely identifies patients across Gauteng Province and is linked to their identity document, passport or other relevant identifiers. Patient records are stored centrally and are accessible to all facilities across the province, with access limited to authorised users. Patient demographics, billing records and clinical records are all linked to the PMI.

The HIS clinical module has been fully configured across all components. It has been implemented at 22 CHCs. Northmead clinic is in the pipeline

(iii)the clinic has three vacant, funded Registered Nurse posts: an optometry nurse was transferred to another clinic and her post remains unfilled; a Registered Nurse resigned and moved to another clinic and her post remains unfilled; and a third Registered Nurse post is yet to be filled. Given assurances that the moratorium on funded vacant posts has been lifted, when will these three posts be filled;

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Response

The recruitment process for two of the three vacant, funded Registered Nurse posts has been concluded and is currently awaiting approval from the Provincial Office before appointments can be finalised. Once approval is granted, the successful candidates will be appointed.

The vacant Optometry Nurse post has not yet been filled and still needs to be advertised. The post will be filled once the advertisement, recruitment and selection processes have been completed in accordance with the applicable recruitment procedures.

(iv) There is a chronic shortage of essential medicines at Northmead Clinic, especially epilepsy medicines, mental-health medicines such as antipsychotic and bipolar medication, and some paediatric antiretroviral medicines. What is being done to address the essential medicine shortages at Northmead Clinic;

Response

- Where stock was undersupplied, alternative strengths and pack sizes were issued as substitutes to ensure continuity of patient treatment.
- Stock rotation is implemented across facilities within the district and, where necessary, with other districts within the province to optimise stock availability and minimise wastage.
- Buy-out processes are utilised for selected antipsychotic medicines when these are unavailable through the standard supply chain.
- For antiretroviral (ARV) medicines, single-line items and approved therapeutic alternatives are supplied as substitutes where appropriate to prevent interruptions in treatment.
- Facilities are authorised to place emergency orders should an item be depleted before the scheduled delivery date, thereby ensuring uninterrupted patient care.

(v) The City of Ekurhuleni has a vacant piece of land alongside the clinic which was initially used as a garden-refuse transfer site and is now being used as a full refuse transfer site. It attracts flies, mice and rats alongside the clinic grounds, presenting a serious health hazard. When will the Gauteng Department of Health address this issue and have the site removed;

Response

To address this concern, the District Environmental Health Services will collaborate with the City of Ekurhuleni Environmental Health Division to investigate the matter and assess the potential public health risks associated with the operation of the refuse transfer site.

A joint assessment will be undertaken to determine compliance with applicable public health, waste management and municipal planning requirements.

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As part of the investigation, the City of Ekurhuleni will be requested to confirm whether the necessary statutory approvals were obtained for the change in use of the site from a garden-refuse transfer site to a general refuse transfer site.

This may include, where applicable:

- Municipal planning or consent use approval, compliance with the National Environmental Management: Waste Act, 2008 (Act No. 59 of 2008)
- Any applicable environmental authorisations in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998)
- Compliance with relevant municipal waste management and public health by-laws.

The joint assessment will further evaluate whether the operation is contributing to a public health nuisance through vector infestation, odours, litter, windblown waste or other environmental health impacts.

Where deficiencies or non-compliance are identified, the relevant authority will be requested to implement appropriate corrective measures to mitigate the identified risks.

The District Environmental Health Services will continue to work collaboratively with the City of Ekurhuleni and other relevant stakeholders to facilitate the resolution of this matter and safeguard the health of patients, staff and the surrounding community.

(vi) No EPWP contracts have been extended into the current financial year. When will this be done to relieve pressure on clinic staff and ensure permanence and continuity of service;

Response

Eight (8) Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) contracts at Northmead Clinic were extended for 12 months, from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027. A further three (3) EPWP contracts, which ran for three months from 1 April 2025 to 30 June 2025 and were then extended from July 2025 to March 2026, have since been terminated.

(vii) Garden equipment is broken and requires repair or replacement. The garden is now left to the community to clean because the mowers and weed eaters do not function. When will this issue be addressed; and

Response

Due to the shortage of groundsmen, gardening and grounds maintenance services have been outsourced by Central Office following a request submitted by the District in April 2026. No appointment has been made yet.

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Broken grounds maintenance equipment cannot be repaired, as the budget for repairs has been centralised at Central Office. The district has been informed that no funding is currently available for repairs. In addition, there is insufficient manpower to operate and maintain the equipment effectively.

(viii) There are shortages of basic clinic cleaning materials and stationery, such as ink toner, printing paper and pens, and supplies are sporadic. When will this supply issue be resolved?

Response

- Cleaning materials have been ordered and delivery is currently awaited.
- The procurement of stationery has been recommended to Central Office for approval. Once approved, the procurement process will proceed.
- The procurement of toner cartridges for desktop printers is centralised at Central Office. A submission requesting the procurement of these items was forwarded to Central Office, and a response is awaited.

Yours faithfully,



MS. FAITH MAZIBUKO, MPL

MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL: HEALTH AND WELLNESS

DATE:

07/09/2026