

Media statement

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Minister's budget should lean towards nursing education – DENOSA Learner Movement

With the country faced with a big backlog of nurse professionals, Democratic Nursing Organisation of South Africa's (DENOSA) Learner Movement is hopeful that tomorrow's budget by Health Minister Dr Aaron Motsoaledi will allocate more financial resources on the nursing education as a vehicle to maximise the citizens' access to quality healthcare and assist the country in meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The poor conditions in our health facilities are having a negative effect on the relationship between communities and health professionals. These are the challenges we had in mind when as the DENOSA Learner Movement we met in February this year, where we resolved on the urgent need for, among others, improved and renewed student residences, which will promote a conducive environment for learning and uphold the dignity of nursing profession.

In making the environment conducive for students, there should be clarity on student funding model. For example, Gauteng and Limpopo use a PERSAL system as a funding model, which is convenient for students as opposed to a bursary system.

"We also raised the need for resources in clinical areas that are compatible with our current curriculum, as well as the need to place students that are doing midwifery courses, which are strict and specific in requirements, in institutions that offer those particular requirements, so that the country can be able to produce competent midwives, as well as the reopening of closed nursing colleges," says National Chairperson of DENOSA Learner Movement, Patrick Lekala.

In his 2011 State of The Nation Address, President Jacob Zuma tabled the plan to revitalise 105 nursing colleges throughout the country. The Learner Movement hopes this process is speeded up, as it will create an enabling environment for students to get quality education, which will result in quality service provided to patients.

In provinces like Northern Cape where supply of nurses to the system is severely compromised by the poor conditions of nursing training. More than 50% of students fail their studies as a result.

The announcement recently of five new nursing campuses in the Eastern Cape must also happen in other provinces, as shortage of nurses is a poisonous challenge that is biting off any hopes of seeing the country being a healthy nation.

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Issued by Democratic Nursing Organisation of South Africa (DENOSA) Learner Movement

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