

**SPEAKING NOTES OF THE MEC FOR HEALTH HON SASEKANI  
MANZINI DURING THE MEETING WITH CHAIRPERSONS OF  
HOSPITAL BOARDS AND MANAGEMENT OF HOSPITALS**

**14 August 2020, Friday**

Chairpersons of the Hospital Boards

HOD Dr Savera Mohangi

Chief Directors

CEOs of Hospitals

Managers

Let me first take this opportunity to greet of you and welcome everyone in the meeting as well as to congratulate the newly elected Chairpersons of the Hospital Boards. It is a great pleasure for me to address and interact with you formally for the first time as Chairpersons of Hospital Boards.

In line with Section 41 (6) of the National Health Act (61 of 2003) as the MEC for Health, I have appointed Hospital Boards for a period of three years effective from the 14 May 2020. The Act empowers me as the MEC responsible for health to appoint a representative board in each establishment classified as a hospital for the period of three years.

Last year I took a decision to align the appointments of the boards to ensure that the period of all the boards in the Province run parallel after identifying the challenges yielded by the staggered period. Our sole purpose is to improve governance, oversight and support and thus improving the accessing to quality health services.

We are meeting today against a backdrop of the widespread Coronavirus pandemic commonly known as COVID-19. This virus has brought panic, anxiety, horror, insecurity and grief around the world. COVID-19 has devastated and tormented the world killing scores of people; leaving families empty, created more orphans, and stole from intellectual resource.

I want to take this opportune moment to deepen our revolutionary banners to salute and honour in gratitude the health care workers that died due to COVID-19 related complications. Our health care workers have grabbed the bull by its ugly horns and are in the frontline in combating COVID-19. For that, we shall remain forever indebted and grateful to our health workers for their selfless sacrifice to save lives and livelihoods.

We are also meeting in a month dedicated to women. This is the month dedicated to celebrate the role of women to fight for liberation and emancipation of blacks in general and African in particular. The role played by women in the liberation struggle is enshrined in the history books of this country and the world at large. Women are the pillar of communities and the backbone of families and without women, there is no humanity, and without humanity, there is no life.

Last year on the 31 August 2019 when commemorating women during the red carpet event held at the Church on the Hill, I challenged all women to “stand together to fight the battle of gender-based violence in South Africa, Africa and the globe”. I asked the women in attendance to stand together

to fight the scourge of abuse suffered by women at the hands of those that are meant to protect them (men).

At that event, I challenged the women to stand against the engraved cultural patriarchy that torments and reduce them to “sub-humans”. I challenged fellow women to fight for the liberation of black girls married at a young age to serve and submit to men”. These are the horrors that face women on daily bases in South Africa and the world.

Year in and year out we witness the brutal attacks and murder of women at the hands of men. This year is not an exception as we continue to receive the sad news of brutal killings of women and children.

Today I stand before you all, men in particular, to challenge you to be active ambassadors of the gender struggles, and call on you to say, “enough is enough” and “not in our name”.

I have appointed the hospital boards to be active advocates for change in the health care system. You do not only represent the MEC not are you just the eyes and ears of the MEC or the Minister in your establishments - but you also represent the aspirations of millions of people that depend on the public health system. You represent the millions of people that have their trust in us for their survival.

There are various principles that govern governance, corporate governance, risk and financial management. Amongst these are the segregation of responsibilities, transparency and accountabilities as advanced by the King III report.

It is imperative for Hospital Boards to understand that sound corporate governance is an essential element of good corporate citizenship. Good corporate governance requires an acknowledgement that an organisation does not operate in a vacuum, but is an integral part of society and therefore has accountability towards current and future stakeholders.

Chairpersons, I urge you to be active players in your respective area of deployment and assist the CEOs of hospitals to advance the vision and mandate of the Department. I urge the Hospital Boards to provide the hospitals with alternative views on issues. This include holding hospitals accountable for their own activities, of course without overstepping the mark.

The Hospital CEOs should not worry about abuse of power, and powers and functions when engaging with their Boards. However, it is important that we draw a link between governance, performance management, risk and financial management.

The King Code of Good Governance states, “good governance is essentially about effective leadership. Leaders should rise to the

challenges of modern governance. Such leadership is characterised by the ethical values of responsibility, accountability, fairness and transparency and based on moral duties that find expression in the concept of Ubuntu”.

Chairperson, to leverage on the limited resources and strengthen oversight, based on the strategic location and the size of the hospitals, some hospitals are sharing hospital boards. Standerton TB and Standerton Hospital; Amajuba Hospital and Elsie Ballot Hospital; Barberton Hospital and Barberton TB; and Waterval Boven and HA Grove Hospitals are sharing boards. This means that the management of both hospitals will attend the board meetings and the board will advise both hospitals at the sitting. The CEOs of Standerton, Amajuba, Barberton and HA Grove will serve as the secretariats for the board meetings.

The desire to serve should drive our primary purpose to serve in the various boards as opposed to monetary or financial rewards. However, the Department provides stipends to board members to compensate for their efforts and time. We should view this from the context of stipends and not payment of services because we serve in the boards ideally on voluntary bases. Stipends to sharing boards shall not be in paid in duplicate.

Allow me to wish you all the best in your areas of responsibility for your three year tenure and I trust that you are going to be an asset to the CEOs, the Department and the health sector as a whole.

Thank you!