



Media Statement: SAMATU condemns the inhumane treatment of junior doctors

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The South African Medical Association Trade Union (SAMATU) in KwaZulu-Natal is saddened by the passing of a medical intern at Prince Mshiyeni Memorial Hospital who was forced to report for duty by his superiors despite his ill-health. This devastating incident highlights the urgent need to address the unacceptable working conditions and treatment that most junior doctors, especially interns, are subjected to by their supervisors.

On many occasions, there has been incidents reported by junior doctors in which their supervisors treat them in an inhumane way, taking advantage of the fact that they are new in the profession and that they may not sign them off at the end of their rotations.

It is saddening that in these times where doctors are subjected to a myriad of challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, attacks salaries, and no surety of employment amongst others, we as doctors still ill-treat each other instead of standing in solidarity against all these challenges.

Junior doctors are the backbone of the healthcare system, providing essential care despite often being subjected to excessive working hours, inadequate supervision, and undue pressure. The tragic loss of a promising young doctor due to neglect and inhumane treatment underscores the need for those that supervise junior doctors to realise that not attending to the welfare and well-being of these vital healthcare professionals will only discourage them from staying in this profession and bringing the necessary change to this noble profession.

The death of this young doctor must be a wake-up call to all medical practitioners. We can no longer ignore the severe strain and inhumane treatment faced by those who are dedicating their lives to saving others. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that our healthcare system is not only

effective for our communities but also considerate of those who deliver it.

SAMATU calls on the management at Prince Mshiyeni Memorial Hospital to investigate this matter and address it accordingly.

SAMATU is committed to advocating for the welfare and well-being of all doctors, regardless of their category of employment. We urge all stakeholders to join us in creating a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for the heroes on the frontlines of our healthcare system.

ENDS.

Issued by:

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