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MEDIA STATEMENT

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MEC CAPE ALLAYS TARKASTAD RESIDENTS' FEARS

MEC for Health Ms Ntandokazi Capa allayed the fears of Tarkastad residents yesterday at Tarkastad Town Hall after a meeting with the community.

The community of Tarkastad was angered by rumours that the Marje Venter Hospital in Tarkastad was going to be closed down.

MEC Capa explained to the meeting that the rumour was circulated to create instability at the town. She further explained that a closure of a health facility must have her signature and that she had not seen a document that suggested that Marje Venter must be closed down. The MEC did however explain that as a caring government, the Eastern Cape Government preaches bringing services closer to the people and a closure of the facility would mean denying people the right to access services.

Capa also explained that the repurposing of facilities has the possibility to bring a comprehensive package of services to a community by having Dentistry, Maternity, Casualty, Radiography/X-ray, Paeds, Acute, Chronic, Pharmacy, Psychologist, Environmental Health, HR/ Administration, Transport which Tarkastad does not have at the moment. MEC Capa added that repurposing has also the possibility of having more people employed. She cited the state of the art Meje CHC and Lusikisiki Village Clinic as examples of how a CHC looks like and the services they offer.



The MEC said that were still internal discussion in the department and whoever told the community of Tarkastad that the hospital was going to close down did that deliberately to stoke up the emotions of the people of Tarkastad.

She emphasized that every step of the process she will communicate with the people of Tarkastad and as yet she had not started that engagement process because she had instructed the Departmental officials to bring forth three options in terms of the repurposing process. The people of Tarkastad expressed their happiness because the MEC came to explain to them the whole process.

They were happy because she kept her word to come see them.

The MEC explained the similarities between what happened in Indwe and what happened in Tarkastad with both communities feeling happy after the meetings.

The meeting with the community lasted less than 40 minutes.

The local and district political leadership were present in the meeting as well as the local structures.

The MEC was accompanied by her office and some members of the Executive Management of the department.

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