

MEDIA STATEMENT

DATE: 16 July 2026

EASTERN CAPE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CONDEMNS ARMED ROBBERY AND HIJACKING OF HEALTH WORKERS NEAR QUMBU

The Eastern Cape Department of Health strongly condemns the armed robbery and hijacking targeting health workers near Qumbu, outside Mthatha.

Four health workers were part of teams assigned to conduct outreach health programs for Mandela Month. They were en route to Mzoboshe Village in Qumbu to provide rehabilitation services to the community of Mhlonto when their vehicle was hijacked and all their belongings were stolen.

Due to this incident, the community has been deprived of much-needed health services, including assessments for assistive devices and wheelchairs.

Health MEC, Ms Ntandokazi Capa, condemned the attack and described the perpetrators as ruthless individuals who showed total disregard for the welfare of their own communities.

“These teams were taking health services to people’s doorsteps — a gesture that honors the sacrifices of former President Mandela and embodies the spirit of Mandela Month. To attack those who serve is an attack on the community itself,” MEC Capa said.

MEC Capa has called on law enforcement agencies to leave no stone unturned in investigating the hijacking and ensuring that the perpetrators are brought to book.

“We must educate communities, and the criminals themselves, about the essential services health workers provide indiscriminately to all our people, including those who commit crime,” she added.

The Department calls on communities to come together in defense of health workers. Robbing a health worker in broad daylight is a heinous act that must be condemned by everyone.

Health is a basic right enshrined in our Constitution, and no one has the liberty to tamper with the delivery of such an essential public service.

The affected health workers will receive psychological support and may be granted leave to recover at home.

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