



In recent staff indabas, people have raised their concerns about the restructuring plan for health in the Western Cape, known as Healthcare 2010. It seems in many instances that these concerns relate to uncertainty regarding what this plan will imply for the individual or the service in which they work.

One of the greatest challenges for restructuring has been the development of a detailed plan of how the services will look in the future. After a painstaking departmental development process over nearly two years, the Western Cape Provincial Cabinet approved the Comprehensive Service Plan for health for consultation on 19th July 2006.

This plan sets out in considerable detail how the services will be delivered, who will deliver services and in what

facilities in the future. I will give just a few examples of what the plan contains.

A fundamental assumption of the comprehensive service plan is that the number of patient contacts will not be reduced but that services will be delivered to clients at the most appropriate level of care. The point of entry into health services will be the clinic with each clinic serving a population of 30 000 people. The clinics will then link up with community health centers and district hospitals in each district.

The current clinics that in many instances deliver a partial service will be consolidated. Different from the present situation all facilities will deliver the full package of primary health care services thus reducing the number of patients who need to bypass a clinic and go to a higher level of care. Good news for the staff and the communities that we serve!

Emergency medical services will be staffed and equipped to deliver on response times of 15 minutes in urban and 40 minutes in rural areas.

This will require, in particular, additional staff and the training of new staff to meet these requirements. Good news for

the staff and the communities that we serve! In terms of hospital services, all hospitals as with primary health care facilities must be able to deliver a full package of services appropriate to a district, regional or central hospital service respectively. The placement of adequate numbers of district level beds in the Cape Metro in particular will require both the addition of new hospitals such as Khayelitsha and Mitchell's Plain hospitals and the relocation and upgrading of others.

There will also be a re-organization of the regional and central hospitals in the Cape Metro to meet the future requirements of health services in Cape Town and surrounding areas. Similarly hospitals in rural areas will be both redeveloped and re-organized. Good news for the staff and the communities that we serve! There is much more health, rehabilitation and tuberculosis services that space does not allow me to describe!

It must be clear, however, from the above that there will be both infrastructure and personnel implications of such a far reaching plan.

Major upgrading of health infrastructure at all levels of care will be needed and is planned

over the coming years. A greater challenge will be the training and acquisition of appropriate skills by staff. At all levels from clinical nurse practitioners to medical practitioners, from finance and human resource practitioners to technical support staff, the challenge will be to recruit, retain and continue to train staff in all aspects of the service.

Current staff should not be concerned since contrary to some fears these changes will not threaten job security but rather the changes will provide job opportunities to those prepared to take them!

There will be many challenges, but I am convinced that the Comprehensive Service Plan as approved for consultation by the Provincial Cabinet provides clear direction for the future.

The Department will now embark on a process of informing all staff, partners and stakeholders of the implications of the plan, and make preparations for implementation. I invite all staff to join with me on this exciting step into the future.

WCRC launches its Health & Well-being Centre

Ms Rosieda Shabodien, the Spouse of the Premier, Ebrahim Rasool, launched a Health and Well-being Centre for Persons with Physical Disabilities at the Western Cape Rehabilitation Centre (WCRC) on Wednesday, 28 June 2006. The initiative for a Health and Well-being Centre at the WCRC started 18 months ago on a visit by Ms Shabodien to the facility. Ms Shabodien accepted a request by the facility's management to act as Patron for the WCRC and was awarded the Patron's Certificate. As part of her support, Ms Shabodien donated R30 000 towards the project as funds which she raised.

The Centre will serve as a haven for people with disabilities and appeal for their intergration back into communities. To be established in the gym, the Centre would provide them with equal access to training, education and sport with reference to a Home for All.



Ms. Jenny HEndry, WCRC facility manager, awards Ms. Roshieda Shabodien with the Patron of the WCRC certificate.