

Union welcomes appointment of Zweli Mkhize as health minister – IOL 30 May 2019

JOHANNESBURG - The Health & Other Services Personnel Trade Union of South Africa (Hospersa) on Thursday welcomed the appointment of Zweli Mkhize as the new Minister of Health.

On Wednesday night, President Cyril Ramaphosa appointed his new cabinet for the sixth administration. Mkhize is the former Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs and served as the Treasurer-General of the ruling ANC between 2012 and 2017

"We welcome the appointment of Zweli Mkhize as this portfolio needed a new dawn," said Hospersa spokesperson Kevin Halama.

The union called on the new minister to resuscitate the ailing Department of Health (DoH) which it said was characterised by staff shortages, poor infrastructure, as well as corruption and maladministration.

"He did a good job in the DoH between 1994 and 2004 when he was the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Health Member of Executive Council (MEC).

"To turn around the DoH, Minister Mkhize will need to hit the ground running and tackle staff shortages, poor infrastructure, corruption and maladministration which have been the root cause of the country's nearly collapsed health care service," said Halama.

Dr Aaron Motsoaledi was moved from the health portfolio to the Department of Home Affairs as the new minister in that portfolio.

"We also applaud Dr Aaron Motsoaledi for his contribution during his tenure as the Minister of Health. Our DoH needs dedicated leaders that will bring urgent renewal, especially with rolling out the National Health Insurance (NHI). We are hopeful that this appointment will bring the required change and resuscitate the department," said Halama.

Halama said they were looking forward to working with Minister Mkhize in addressing a number of challenges affecting the delivery of quality health care as well as worker related issues affecting its members.

Hospersa applauded the President for appointing fifty percent women in the new cabinet, saying that the country was moving in the right direction in addressing gender parity in senior government positions.

"We applaud president Ramaphosa for ensuring that women take up key positions in Government as this will set a good example in addressing gender parity, not only in government but in the private sector as well," said Halama.