



Attention: All Media Partners

Media Statement of the South African National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (SANCA NATIONAL)

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MEDIA RELEASE

SANCA NPO'S PROVIDING SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT SERVICES IN GAUTENG ARE SERIOUSLY THREATENED BY LACK OF FUNDS.

#Despite Government's recognition of substance abuse as one of the priority issues, some Gauteng SANCA treatment centres are facing imminent closure due to delays in finalising funding processes for the new financial year and the lack of communication from Gauteng Department of Social Development (GDSD).

As South Africa commemorated Workers Day on the 1st of May 2024, a dark cloud of uncertainty hangs over the workforce at many SANCA treatment centres as their jobs are threatened by the delayed SLA's for future funding.

On Friday, April 26 2024, SANCA Horizon in Boksburg, one of the bigger and oldest SANCA centres, was forced to temporarily close due to this issue.

"It is quite tragic that the situation has reached this point'. This is just one example of the impact the delay of subsidies by the Gauteng Department of Social Development has on services to people with substance use disorders." said Mrs. Adrie Vermeulen, the national coordinator for SANCA.

Twelve SANCA centers, which provide a range of awareness, prevention and treatment services, have been negatively impacted by the GDSD's budgetary constraints and the SLA signing transition phase. The inability of GDSD to communicate makes it challenging to plan and get ready for the future.

On April 12, 2024, the SANCA National office sent correspondence regarding this issue to the HOD, Ms. Matilda Gasela. To date, her office has not responded regarding the raised concerns.

The twenty out-patient/community-based treatment service locations, three in-patient treatment centers for adolescents, five adult treatment centers, three daycare centers,

two halfway houses, and one mobile clinic comprise the total number of SANCA Gauteng centers. In order to reach the most vulnerable target groups in communities, the centers are located in high-risk areas. In Gauteng, there would be an impact on approximately 8,075 beneficiaries/service users for treatment and over 456,000 beneficiaries for awareness and preventative interventions.

Most SANCA centres had decided not to renew the contracts of their volunteers for the prevention programs at the end of March 2024 due to the impact of the delayed signing of the service level agreements (SLAs) and the threat of a cut in subsidies.

These decisions were made because it is uncertain if these services will be funded and, if so, what the cuts in subsidies would be. This had an impact on 202 young people without jobs who were given stipends to carry out awareness and prevention campaigns in local communities and schools. At one of the SANCA centers, personnel layoffs are already imminent. By the end of April 2024, three of the centers will not be able to pay salaries.

Over the past seven years, SANCA has treated over 80,000 beneficiaries and has been at the forefront of the fight against substance use disorders. This does not include the provided preventative services. To guarantee compliance and high-quality services in all nine provinces, DSD and SANCA National both keep an eye on and monitor and assess the centers. Over the years, SANCA centers have demonstrated their compliance with all laws and requirements. They also maintain an essential relationship with DSD to guarantee that treatments are provided to individuals with substance use disorders, a group that is marginalized.

SANCA would like the MEC Mbali Hlophe to step in and address their concerns. Furthermore, that the service level agreements must be sent through as soon as possible so that the SANCA centres can plan and prepare for the future.

Please contact Adrie Vermeulen on 0834997888 or on her email adrie@sancaoffice.org.za for any comments.