



PsySSA Response:
Life Esidemeni crisis



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The Psychological Society of South Africa (PsySSA) again condemns in the strongest terms the actions of the health authorities leading to deaths of the patients from the Life Esidemeni healthcare facility. Prior to the ill-advised transfer of the patients, PsySSA was among the organisations who communicated with the Gauteng MEC expressing our concerns about the transfer (read [letter](#) and [statement](#) here). As with other organisations we were assured that the patients were being transferred to appropriate facilities where their treatment and care would be of the same calibre as Life Esidemeni.

The report from the Health Ombudsman provides tangible evidence of the very poor decision making that resulted in the deaths of vulnerable people who should have been protected and cared for in a more concerted manner. We call on the government to adopt a whole new approach to mental health because, as we have articulated previously, mental health is not given sufficient priority in our health care system. This has to change urgently.

The crisis of the Life Esidemeni patients is a tragedy that must never again befall our country and we urge our government to engage with the various professional associations and NGO's involved in mental health care in order to provide the best possible care to the mentally ill.

Psychological Society of South Africa (PsySSA)

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