

# R1.8bn only tip of the iceberg

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WITH fresh promises that the new Kimberley mental hospital will be completed by next month, the R1.8 billion already spent on construction is only the tip of the iceberg, as the Department of Health will also have to fork out millions of rands in order to run the new facility.

The Department of Roads and Public Works last week blamed sub-contractors and “underperformance” for missing the December 2017 construction deadline.

It also stated that, contrary to the Department of Health’s claims, the March 31 date for practical completion is “still under consideration”.

According to the occupation plan that was presented to the portfolio committee for health in Parliament last week, more funds will be needed to set up patient systems, appoint staff and purchase equipment.

The Department of Health was allocated a total provincial budget of R4.4 billion for the 2017/18 financial year.

The other major cost driver at the mental hospital will be salaries, where the Department of Health is expected to pay R94 million per annum to compensate employees at the new facility.

The projected staff complement will include four psychiatrists, seven psychologists, six pharma-



Picture: Soraya Crowie

cists, four medical officers, 17 operational managers, including the CEO, assistant manager of nursing and six assistant nursing directors, 113 professional nurses, 24 enrolled nurses, one general manager, 56 enrolled nursing assistants, 52 clerks, 225 cleaners, seven occupational therapists, five physiotherapists, six social workers and one dietitian.

The department added that a human resources recruitment plan had been finalised, where the organogram had been established based on the national psychiatric staffing norms and standards.

The department indicated that a number of these vacancies had already been filled.

The hospital will also have to pay for security, including five escort supervisors and 56 security super-

visors and officers.

Security personnel will be permanently stationed at security nodes and wards and will be responsible for access control.

The department indicated that the recruitment of security personnel was overdue, for the purpose of systems training.

The goods and services budget has been set at R33 million and the projected capital budget has been set at R12 million.

The hospital will accommodate a maximum of 246 beds on continuous assessment of general hospital admission needs.

The department stated that all clinical equipment and furniture would be procured during the 2017/18 financial year.

It added that no large items of

equipment required specialist installation, except for electroconvulsive therapy equipment.

Information communication technology (ICT) will have to be installed and connected, while staff still need to be recruited and trained.

Meanwhile, it was indicated that the West End Specialised Hospital will overspend its budget by R943 million during the 2017/18 financial year, due to the non-allocation of funds.

West End was allocated a budget of R54 million for the 2017/18 financial year.

The West End hospital has 142 beds and currently does not provide for forensic patients under observation who are managed by the Department of Correctional Services

“There is continuous pressure for admission of acute voluntary and involuntary assisted mental health users, including state patients, where five new admissions have been registered by the Department of Correctional Services,” the department indicated.

An additional 16 beds for involuntary patients are being accommodated at Harmony Home to alleviate pressure.

It has been proposed that once the new mental hospital is up and running, the vacant beds at West End hospital will be used as a mental health rehabilitation centre as well as to admit mental health patients that cannot be accommodated at general hospitals.

West End hospital will also need to fill several staff vacancies.