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The construction site of the new orthotics and prosthetics centre at Ngwelezana Hospital

Infrastructure boost at Ngwelezana Hospital

Gugu Myeni

IN a move to reduce waiting times and boost critical services for patients in the region, millions of rands are being injected into infrastructure development at Ngwelezana Tertiary Hospital.

The local hospital, which serves thousands of patients in the region, will become a hive of construction activity amid plans for new centres for oncology, orthotics and prosthetics care.

KZN Health MEC Nomagugu Simelane last week revealed plans for a new oncology centre at the public hospital, expected to be funded by the national Department of Health to the tune of R250-million.

This is together with the R63-million budget for the building of the new orthotics and prosthetics centre, revealed by Public Works and Infrastructure MEC Martin Meyer.

The MECs were delivering their respective budget policies for the 2024/25 financial year.

"A chemotherapy unit has already been opened at this hospital, with a full-time radiation oncologist appointed.

"We are pleased to report that, since the first quarter of the year, we've assisted 279 patients with chemotherapy. However, where further oncology

services are needed, for now patients are sent to iNkosi Albert Luthuli Central Hospital," said Simelane.

"This new oncology unit will assist greatly in reducing the travelling time for patients requiring access to such services from the northern parts of the province," said Simelane.

Meanwhile, trenches are being dug in preparation for the multi-million rand orthotics and prosthetics centre.

The anticipated state-of-the-art facility is expected to respond to the dire need for orthopaedic, orthotic and prosthetic care in the region, together with reducing waiting times for patients.

The health MEC further highlighted progress in the development of a new tertiary hospital in Empangeni.

"The business case for this project has been approved by the national Department of Health, and the clinical brief was finalised and approved on 14 December 2023. We have also secured a site for the new hospital.

"As we move forward, we are preparing processes to select a design team, which is scheduled to begin anytime from now.

"We therefore hereby make an official call to the private sector to join us in a private-public partnership to build this hospital," said Simelane.