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Portfolio committee assesses TB hospital

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BONGANI - As part of their ongoing visits to assess health facilities, the portfolio committee on health visited Bongani TB Hospital on April 3.

The hospital started as a Roman Catholic Church missionary hospital in 1957, providing services for TB treatment, general conditions including assault, typhoid, diarrhoea, bilharzia, obstetric and maternity cases.

The MEC for health, Sasekani Manzini, said the government took over the hospital from 1976 to 1977 and in November 1988, it became TB specialised.

"Bongani supports six district hospitals, two regional hospitals, tertiary and several primary healthcare facilities in the province. The multidrug resistant TB (MDR-TB) unit has 40 bedded units with 28 well-designed wards to meet infection control standards comprising of single and double bedded rooms," Manzini said.

According to her, the construction of the MDR-TB unit began in September 2010. It has 60 approved beds, 45 usable beds, and eight cubicles accommodating 45 patients.

Bongani TB Hospital has a catchment population of

159 683 situated along the R538 about 5km from Hazyview.

It also serves Thaba Chweu, Bushbuckridge, the north and south of Mbombela and the rest of the province.

During the presentation of the hospital profile by the chief executive officer, Dr Lindiwe Williams-Ndlovu, she outlined how the hospital is providing healthcare services aligned with the national core standards set by the Department of Health.

Recently, the Bongani community expressed their frustration over the lack of development of a tar road leading to the hospital from the R538. The residents said the dirt road gets muddy and dilapidates during rainy season.

They called for the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport (DPWRT) to implement a road construction project.

DPWRT's spokesperson, Bongani Dhlamini, said the department has no budget for the rehabilitation of the road.

"The road is estimated to be 500m long and is currently undergoing a routine of maintenance. Unfortunately, there is no budget for the rehabilitation at this time as we prioritise our projects based on the availability of funds," Dhlamini said.