

LABOUR-HPCSA
JOHANNESBURG Aug 26 Sapa
HPCSA "HORRIFIED" BY EFFECTS OF STRIKES

The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) has denounced the public service strike because it had resulted in patient deaths, it said in a statement on Thursday.

"The dismal picture currently portrayed in our public hospitals as a result of the strike, is one of disgrace, embarrassment and failure," said HPCSA chief executive officer Marella O'Reilly.

The strike has disrupted hospital services, schools, courts and

other public services for nine days as workers demand an 8.6 percent salary increase and a R1000 monthly housing allowance.

The workers have rejected the government's offer of seven percent and a R700 allowance.

O'Reilly said the HPCSA was a regulatory body with a mandate to

"guide health-care practitioners and protect the public" and it condemned any action which, through neglect, endangered patients' lives.

"We would like to thank the thousands of health-care practitioners who have, despite threats from strikers, remained unwavering in their dedication and have continued in their duties, selflessly treating patients and saving lives", she said.

She called for urgent mediation on the wage dispute to ensure that "essential services deliver on the public's constitutional right to health-care services".