

**COMMUNIQUE: FOLLOW-UP TO THE OPEN LETTER FROM THE 'I AM' MOVEMENT
ADDRESSED TO THE MINISTER OF HEALTH DR JOE PHAAHLA AND GAUTENG PREMIER
DAVID MAKHURA.**

An Open Letter, signed by **one hundred and thirty-five** of SA's leading health professionals and health workers, despatched on June 21, 2022, conveyed their dismay and outrage at the victimisation of Dr Tim de Maayer and other health workers and professionals who have spoken out about the intolerable conditions in public health services.

Their repeated pleas for urgent interventions to prevent debility and deaths of patients arising from deficient provisioning and management have been routinely ignored by an administration whose only response has been to intimidate and threaten disciplinary action.

We were encouraged when the Premier's office eventually responded and arranged to meet with a group of senior clinicians from Gauteng health facilities on July 11. The assurances given by the assembled officials to address the matters canvassed in the Open Letter are cautiously welcomed, despite the absence of any official commitment to specific demands.

Consequently, we take this opportunity to apprise you of the current iteration of the "I Am" campaign generated by the Open Letter.

The one hundred and thirty-five signatories to the Open Letter have now been joined by almost **seven thousand** health professionals and health workers, supported by **three and a half thousand** concerned South Africans, from across the country, all concerned with the state of public health services and in full agreement with the contents of the Open Letter. (Link to both Change.org petitions).

If ever any validation of the contents of the Open Letter was required, we commend to you this massive endorsement.

It should leave you in no doubt of the views and determination of health workers, supported by the people to whom they owe their duty of care, to continue with this campaign until a decisive response from the government is forthcoming.

Health professionals and health workers are the lifeblood of the public health system. There are only so many of us. We are beholden to the people to whom we have sworn an oath, not to a disinterested and often callous administration, so listen to us when we advocate for our patients.

Your positive response to our call will signal your compliance with the constitutional obligation to provide universal access to healthcare for all who live in South Africa, which can only ever be delivered by a revitalised and high-performing public health service.

THE "I AM" MOVEMENT

JULY 25, 2022

This is who we are (Link to "Full list of signatories published on PHF website")