

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

MOTIVATION OF THE MOTION ON EXPANDING MEDICAL CLINICS TO ALL TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN THE COUNTRY IN ORDER TO DECREASE THE UNWANTED PREGNANCIES AND DUMPING OF BABIES; AND TO PROVIDE FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES AND GENERAL HEALTH RELATED SERVICES TO THE YOUTH. THIS WILL ALSO HELP TO BRING UPON YOUTH FRIENDLY SERVICES AT MEDICAL HEALTH FACILITIES.

WEDNESDAY 16th, SEPTEMBER 2015

By: Hon Elma Dienda, MP

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Hon Speaker

Hon Members

Chapter 11, Article 95 (e) of our Constitution reads as follows:

Promotion of the Welfare of the people.

(e) Ensurance that every citizen has a right to fair and reasonable access to public facilities and services in accordance with the law.

Allow me to quote from the Community-Based Health Care Policy (And I hope this policy has been adopted by this August house, because it was drafted in 2007 already).

“The Government of Namibia recognizes that health is a fundamental human right of all Namibians and is committed to achieving health for all Namibians. With this in mind, the Government, through the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MOHSS), adopted the Primary Health Care (PHC) approach for provision of health care services, with Community Based Health Care (CBHC) as a strategy to achieve community participation and involvement in their own health” — end of quote

Hon. Speaker, Hon. Members,

A clinic is the smallest health facility **permanently** staffed with professional health workers rendering Primary Health Care (PHC) to the community. It is responsible for PHC and the public health of the population within their vicinity.

According to the National Health Policy Framework of 2010 – 2020, and I quote

“(The) Health of young people and adolescents is important for the nation and for the individuals. It is in this age group that the transition happens from childhood onto adulthood, and when dramatic biological changes are happening. This is also the period when social roles and norms are defined and molded by the influence of the family, the community and society at large. These changes are reflected in exploring new roles and taking risks, which sometimes lead to ill health and disease” – end of quote.

Hon. Speaker, Hon. Members,

Free and charitable clinics are a critical part of our health care safety net system. It is nonprofit-orientated and is thus able and serve those without medical insurance or medical aid for free or by merely charging relatively affordable nominal fees. This is evidenced by the fact that at our local clinics people are normally paying a nominal fee of only N\$4.00 per person, per visit.

Hon. Speaker, Hon. Members,

I have specifically chosen to focus my attention on the prevailing situation in Windhoek, as the majority of our Institutions of Higher Learning are situated in Windhoek. The vast majority of Namibian students are housed in Windhoek and this evidenced by the fact that Windhoek has 33 Institutions of Higher Learning that are accredited by the NQA, with the University of Namibia, the International University of Management and the Polytechnic of Namibia accounting for over 80% of these students.

Hon. Speaker, why am I advocating for the establishment of 24 Hour Free health services at all campuses for these ~~three~~ Institutions of Higher Learning?

1. Currently, there are only six state clinics in Windhoek. Namely: one in Khomasdal, Robert Mugabe Clinic, Donkerhoek, Wanaheda, Okuryungavaa and one in Hakahana.
2. The population of Windhoek is approximately 350 000, and as is common cause the large part of that are young people and students.
3. Only a limited number of cards are issued daily, depending on the availability of nursing staff at clinics. And all other patients who are not issued cards on a given day are turned away and asked to return the next day.

4. Consequently people often wait in ques from as early as 05h00–06h00 in the morning in the hope of being lucky enough to be issued the limited daily tickets. This practice makes it very difficult for students who often have to contend with assignment deadlines and test schedules to be able to queue up as early as that and worse, possibly have to spend the whole day at the clinic waiting in ques. We cannot expect to produce the innovators and thinkers this country needs if we at the same time expect our students to miss out on valuable lecture and study time whilst waiting in ques.
5. Shortage of ambulance services all over the country, and Windhoek is no exception, also means that unless PHC is available within close proximity of campuses, then in emergency situations students are left stranded.
6. Another issue of concern is the affordability of health services for students who already have mounting student loans, text books, renting, taxi fees etc. to worry about. Due to the limited amount of Institutions of higher Learning in other parts of the country, a lot of students come from outside of Windhoek and have to pay for rent, taxi fares and so on.
7. Safety of our Youth: Public transport is not always reliable and cannot be relied on to get someone to a hospital in time in instances where they are undergoing a critical medical emergency.
8. Another area of concern is that the public clinics we have only operate specific limited hours, whereas I would propose that the student clinics be available around the clock, 24 Hours / day.
9. I believe the attitude and behavior of our Nursing Staff who are not specifically trained or equipped to deal with young people can also discourage young people from going to other Public Health Facilities. Some of the youth complain that medical staff treat them like criminals when they go for family planning or related advice, which in most cases is by asking very sensitive questions and in very judgmental tones e.g. Are you sexually active? Why are you sexually active at your age? I believe we need to create

environments where young people feel comfortable to address nurses on these issues as this can serve as a means of preventing STD transmission, teen pregnancies and baby dumping.

Hon. Speaker, Hon. Members,

I hope that this Motion which is about protecting our future learners is not offensive to anybody in this house, but is seen as a step to building our nation.

This motion to be referred to the **Standing Committee of Gender Equality, Social Development and Family Affairs.**

