Advocacy Letter to Delft Community Health Centre
Date: 24 March 2025

To:
Mr. Mzwamadoda Gaji
Facility Manager
Delft Community Health Centre

Subject: Urgent Call for Action: Strengthening TB Services at Delft Community Health Centre

Dear Mr. Gaji,
We write to you as community health leaders and civil society representatives committed to improving health outcomes in Delft. We recognise the essential role that Delft Community Health Centre (CHC) plays in providing lifesaving TB services to our community. As you are aware, the Tygerberg sub-district bears one of the highest TB burdens in the Western Cape, making the quality and accessibility of services at Delft CHC critical to achieving our shared goal of ending TB.

We appreciate the ongoing efforts of your staff, especially under challenging conditions, to implement TB policies that can save lives. However, based on the high TB test positivity rate, ongoing community feedback and experiences shared by people living with TB in Delft, we have identified several urgent challenges that must be addressed to improve the quality of TB care.

Community TB Priorities:

1. Improve Person-Centred Care for TB Patients
We urge Delft CHC to prioritise person-centred care through the following actions:

- Implement a simple appointment system to reduce waiting times and overcrowding. This could be done by making 3 broad appointment slots for patients to attend e.g 7H00 - 10H00, 10H00 - 13H00, 13H00 - 16H00. Provide dedicated TB counselling and regular mental health and substance use screenings for all TB patients.
- Establish peer-led support groups to enhance adherence and psychosocial support.
- Provide ongoing training to all staff on respectful, non-stigmatising communication with TB patients.
- Ensure all TB patients, especially those who are malnourished or experiencing food insecurity, are referred for nutritional assessments, and have consistent access to the clinic's nutritional supplement programme and are linked to social support services for food and nutritional assistance
- Strengthening referrals for social grants to ensure that TB patients receive timely financial assistance.

2. Strengthen Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)
To protect patients and staff, we recommend:

- Keeping doors and windows open to improve ventilation in waiting areas and TB service rooms.
- Ensure access to N95 respirators for health workers and surgical masks for patients.
- All health workers in the facility should be for TB annually.

3. Increase TB Education and Awareness
To enhance TB literacy in the community, Delft CHC could:

- Conduct regular health talks in the waiting area on TB prevention, TB testing and treatment and distribute educational material.
- Screen educational videos on TB at the clinic and in outreach settings.

- Host regular community health events to reduce stigma, promote testing according to the Targeted Universal TB Testing (TUTT) policy, (TB close contacts, PLHIV and those treated for TB in the previous 2 years), and uptake of TPT according to the new Treatment of TB Infection policy, as well as encourage treatment completion in collaboration with local stakeholders.

4. Monthly review of TB data with the facility manager
In alignment with the National TB Recovery Plan and National Strategic Plan for HIV, TB and STIs (2023-2028), we request that staff at Delft CHC:

Hold monthly TB data review meetings with the facility manager to strategise improvements in:

- The number of individuals tested for TB and initiated on treatment.
- The TB positivity rate (which should decrease if more people are tested).
- The uptake of TPT (TB Preventive Treatment).
- Key challenges in testing, diagnosis, and treatment initiation.

Access to TB data will enable local TB Champions to collaborate with Delft CHC to track trends, identify challenges, and contribute community-based insights toward practical solutions.

We look forward to your response and working together to make Delft CHC a leader in person-centred, community-friendly TB care.

Yours sincerely,

Bravo Thompson, Tracey Visagie, Brenda Diedericks

Signed by:

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