



Rural Doctors Association of Southern Africa

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For Immediate Release

Statement by the Rural Doctors Association of Southern Africa (RuDASA)

The recent Developments of the Department of Health laying a charge of misconduct against Dr Colin Pfaff of Manguzi Hospital in the Northern KwaZulu-Natal are of deep concern.

Many districts in the country are struggling to reach most of the targets set by the National Strategic Plan for addressing the HIV pandemic. In this context, the creative approach Dr Colin Pfaff implemented to provide dual therapy prevention of mother to child transmission (PMTCT) to about 80% of antenatal women and the newborn children (in line with policies of SANAC) is commendable. The Umkhanyakude District (where Manguzi Hospital is situated) has for a long time shown innovation in the comprehensive care of people and communities – including decentralized ARV provisioning. These approaches are considered to be the state of the art programs and many sites are learning valuable lessons about how to integrate HIV care into the Primary Health Care system. So it is with disbelief that we note that in this context Dr Colin Pfaff is charged with misconduct.

It is unclear why this attempt to find solutions to the implementation of dual therapy PMTCT program is undermined and seen as misconduct. Furthermore it is unclear how the case against Dr Colin Pfaff in any way assists women and newborn children around Manguzi Hospital – or in the country as a whole – in accessing dual therapy PMTCT.

We support Dr Colin Pfaff in this case and call on the Hospital Manager of Manguzi Hospital to withdraw the charge with immediate effect.

We also call on all Department of Health officials and health care workers at all levels to fast-track the implementation of dual therapy PMTCT as outlined by the South African National AIDS Council, and in line with core values of the Department of Health and Batho Pele.

END

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