

Barney Selebano resigns from Gauteng health department

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Suspended Gauteng health department head Dr Barney Selebano has resigned. This was confirmed by a senior official in the department.



Dr Barney Selebano. Photo: *BusinessLIVE*

In December, Selebano finally began testifying at the Life Esidimeni arbitration hearings and placed some of the blame for the tragedy on the shoulders of former health MEC Qedani Mahlangu.

He said pressure to place patients in non-governmental organisations (NGOs) came from Mahlangu, to which evidence leader Patrick Ngutshana replied: "Now we are getting somewhere."

More than 140 mentally ill state patients died when they were transferred to unregistered NGOs.

Selebano was forced to testify at the arbitration hearings after losing his court bid to challenge his subpoena.

Selebano said "some" NGOs, including Precious Angels, took in more mentally ill patients than they could cope with so that they could make more money, calling it a "numbers game".

Twenty patients died at Precious Angels.

Selebano admitted that there was great pressure to move patients into NGOs after the Life Esidimeni homes contract was cancelled, but would not be drawn on who cancelled the contract that left almost 1,700 severely intellectually disabled patients without homes.

The judge asked Selebano more than 10 times why he moved patients out of NGOs. He would only say it was because he had been instructed to.

After three hours on the stand he admitted the NGOs were "not fit for purpose".

Source: ,i>BDpro

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