

# Botched procedure allegedly cripples man

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A Soweto man who has been reduced to crutches after an allegedly botched lumbar puncture at Chris Hani-Baragwanath Hospital three months ago has now turned to the Health Professionals Council of SA for help.

Tshepo Monyake, 38, has been using crutches since October last year after he was admitted to the hospital when it was suspected he might have meningitis.

According to him, a senior doctor instructed a student doctor to administer a spinal tap on him but she missed the spine five times, allegedly crippling Monyake.

He did not have meningitis. Baragwanath has since done a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scan on his spine which, according to their spokesman Monde Ntebe, cleared Monyake of any possible injuries.

But there was no explanation why he could not walk by himself.

Out of frustration and wanting explanation, Monyake has now asked the HPCSA to intervene in his case.

In an e-mail sent to the HPCSA on December 24, which *Sowetan* has seen, Monyake seeks clarity on why the student doctor who did the lumbar puncture was not supervised and asked how many times a doctor was allowed to tap the spine in one examination.

On December 28 Monyake consulted another government orthopaedic surgeon, who recommended urgent surgery after seeing his MRI scan.

The doctor, who gave Monyake a report which has also been seen by *Sowetan*, discovered possible tumours on his spine. He also found disc degeneration.

Speaking to *Sowetan* yesterday, Monyake said the HPCSA was his last hope for getting answers.

"I need some sort of clarity to find out what exactly happened to me," he said.

HPCSA spokeswoman Lize Nel could not be reached for comment.

Source: *Sowetan* via I-Net Bridge

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