

22 June 2020

THE SOUTH AFRICAN THORACIC SOCIETY'S CONCERNED ABOUT THE SUSPENSION OF PROFESSOR EBRAHIM VARIAVA

The South African Thoracic Society is concerned and troubled about the suspension of Professor Ebrahim Variava, Head of Internal Medicine at Tshepong Hospital. Professor Variava is an internationally recognised researcher who has substantially contributed to our knowledge about the diagnosis and management of tuberculosis including drug-resistant TB. TB is the commonest cause of death in South Africa and has a substantial negative impact on our economy. His absence at the hospital will compromise patient care at a facility that is already short in personnel. The timing could not have been worse given the national crisis we are in. Thus, his suspension will compromise our fight against TB, optimal clinical care, and COVID 19.

Instead of being divisive at this time, we should be holding hands together against two killer diseases, namely TB and COVID 19. We sincerely appeal to the Department of Health in the North West Province to urgently reinstate Prof Variawa and amicably resolve any dispute.

ISSUED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN THORACIC SOCIETY



Prof. Coenie Koegelenberg (SATS President)