PLANNING FOR HIV/AIDS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ENTERPRISES

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ABSTRACT

The HIV/AIDS epidemic is growing at an alarming rate in the Southern African region, including South Africa. The impact of the epidemic on the socio-economy of South Africa, as well as the South African Public Service, needs to be properly understood so that appropriate measures can be put in place to address the challenges resulting from the epidemic. The article focuses on an evaluation of the planning function used in the implementation of HIV/AIDS policies in the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE). The research methodology used for the article is qualitative in nature and uses interviews and a questionnaire to evaluate employee perceptions regarding the implementation of departmental HIV/AIDS policies. The article further describes the legal framework supporting the appropriate management of HIV/AIDS in the Public Service. It further reviews the initiatives that have been established in planning for HIV/AIDS in the DPE; identifies the planning challenges that are experienced by the DPE in managing HIV/AIDS effectively; and makes recommendations towards successful implementation. Without an appropriate response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, the DPE will be unable to maintain its mandate in assuring the proper functioning of state-owned enterprises.

INTRODUCTION

The HIV/AIDS epidemic threatens the ability of government to deliver basic services to the public. In the case of the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE), the epidemic threatens the ability of the DPE to make sure that state-owned enterprises function efficiently in delivering goods and services to the public. The nature of the
services that Public Service departments and state-owned enterprises render to the public is important to the livelihoods of millions of South Africans. State-owned enterprises provide services such as electricity, water, transport and telecommunication. Addressing HIV/AIDS in the workplace provides an opportunity for the Public Service to ensure sustained service delivery.

The South African government’s main priority is that of poverty eradication, and it is clear that Public Service departments have a crucial role to play in order to accomplish this goal. The DPE is no exception to the achievement of this goal. Since the DPE is responsible for overseeing state-owned enterprises, which are important vehicles through which the government participates in the economy, its performance is crucial in ensuring that government is able to realise its goal.

Through state-owned enterprises, government is able to ensure that the majority of the country’s population has access to services that cannot be provided directly by the state as these enterprises are expected to provide services at much more reasonable tariffs compared to the private sector. It is therefore, important that government ensures that state-owned enterprises perform effectively and are managed properly. In order to be able to do this, government needs highly skilled and qualified public employees. Government has e.g. implement measures that ensure that HIV/AIDS does not negatively affect its ability to perform this task.

As both an employer and provider of basic services in the country, the Public Service will experience pressure in terms of policy formulation, service delivery and human resource management in order to deal with the challenges that will be brought on by the pandemic. The Public Service, including the DPE, therefore, has to take the management of HIV/AIDS in the workplace seriously in order to sustain its human resources and be in a position to continue formulating policies and delivering basic services to the public.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The HIV/AIDS epidemic has an impact on every facet of government and civil society. Currently the estimated prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS in South Africa is 29,5% (Department of Health, 2005). This prevalence rate also applies to public employees since they also form part of the South African population. The impact of HIV/AIDS on the DPE, as well as the entire Public Service, in terms of cost factors and service delivery aspects needs to be understood so that appropriate policies and programmes can be implemented and monitored in order to mitigate and manage it. The possible future effects of HIV/AIDS are one of the current environmental factors affecting informed strategic and human resource planning in the Public Service, including the DPE (DPSA, 2000:1).

Strategic planning refers to the formulation of goals, identification of current objectives and strategy, environmental analysis, aids analysis, identification of opportunities and threats, shortage analysis, and strategic decision-making. The main purpose of strategic planning is to improve productivity and effectiveness by providing guidelines to public managers on what they will do in their departments in the future. A rational process should be used to predict employee needs, identify shortcomings and implement processes (Van
The HIV/AIDS pandemic presents a challenge to public managers in the DPE to engage in effective and informed strategic planning. The article is based on a qualitative research approach, which means that it seeks to produce descriptive data (Brynard and Hanekom, 1997:29). The article seeks to establish the benefits of managing HIV/AIDS in the DPE as opposed to ignoring the fact that the HIV/AIDS epidemic will have a negative impact on the ability of the DPE to deliver services. Information for the study was obtained through interviews, questionnaires and the review of relevant literature. The officials who are responsible for the formulation and implementation of responses to HIV/AIDS at the DPE were interviewed, as the research required the perspectives of those that were directly involved in the implementation of responses to HIV/AIDS. The Special Programmes Officer, who falls under the Human Capital Development Directorate at the DPE, was interviewed.

A questionnaire was developed in order to determine the perceptions of DPE employees regarding the management of HIV/AIDS in the DPE. Employees at various levels in the organisational structure of the DPE were randomly selected as respondents to the questionnaires (November 2005). Random sampling, which is a procedure in which units of a population are selected in such a way that each unit has the same chance of being selected as any other unit in the population when selection takes place, was used as a sampling method (Statistics South Africa, 1997:13). Random sampling was selected as a sampling method for the article to ensure that all employees at the DPE had the same chance for being selected as respondents to the questionnaire. Random sampling also ensures that the views of employees at different levels of the organisational structure had an opportunity to state their opinions regarding the departmental HIV/AIDS programme.

While it is important to understand the research method used to obtain information, the article’s main focus rests on the research findings. However, it is also imperative to understand the legal framework that informs the HIV/AIDS planning function within the DPE.

**HIV/AIDS LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

Internationally, the initial legal and human rights response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic was characterised by the introduction of laws that restrict the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS, *i.e.* laws that promoted discriminating against people living with HIV/AIDS. As more information about the real risks and modes of transmission of HIV/AIDS became apparent, protective laws replaced the restrictive ones. The *World Health Organisation* (WHO) and the *International Labour Organisation* (ILO) advocated that pre-employment HIV/AIDS screening as part of the assessment of fitness to work is unnecessary and should not be required (HIV/AIDS Management Services, 1999).

55 of 1998), Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 (Act 85 of 1993), and the Code of Good Practice on HIV/AIDS and Employment by the Department of Labour. These laws and codes form the legal framework to which every workplace policy and programme on HIV/AIDS should comply (Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC), 2001:6).

The South African Public Service has developed a national strategic five-year plan (2000-2005), entitled the HIV/AIDS/STD Strategic Plan for South Africa: 2000-2005, that will guide the country’s response as a whole to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. All Public Service departments, including the DPE, organizations and stakeholders are expected to use this document as a basis for developing their own strategic and operational plans. The primary goals of the strategic plan are to reduce the number of new infections, especially among the youth, and to reduce the impact of HIV/AIDS on individuals, families and communities (Department of Health, 2000:5-16). As a Public Service department, the DPE is guided by the principles of the HIV/AIDS/STD Strategic Plan for South Africa: 2000-2005.

The DPE has already put in place measures that deal with HIV/AIDS in the workplace which are in line with the policy framework for managing HIV/AIDS in the Public Service. These initiatives include a Departmental HIV/AIDS policy that deals with discrimination, confidentiality and an HIV/AIDS workplace programme (DPE, 2002:1).

The DPE has established a framework for action and has defined its position and practices in relation to HIV/AIDS by developing an HIV/AIDS policy. The policy states that the DPE acknowledges the seriousness of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and seeks to minimise the social, economic and developmental consequences that the epidemic might have on the DPE and its personnel. The DPE has also committed itself to providing resources and leadership for the implementation of an HIV/AIDS programme (DPE, 1999:2).

The principles that guide the management of HIV/AIDS within the DPE include (DPE, 1999:2):

- consultation with public employees and their representatives in all matters relating to the development and implementation of the HIV/AIDS policy and programme;
- protection of staff members or prospective staff members from discrimination on the basis of their HIV/AIDS status;
- openness, acceptance, care and support for employees living with HIV/AIDS;
- no mandatory HIV/AIDS testing;
- encouragement of voluntary counselling and testing (VCT);
- the treatment of an employee’s HIV/AIDS status with confidentiality; and
- the treatment of all public employees with equality with regard to rights and obligations.

The Special Programmes Unit, in collaboration with the Departmental HIV/AIDS Committee, is responsible for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the HIV/AIDS programme, communication of the policy to all public employees, and updating management on the implementation and the progress that has been made with regard to HIV/AIDS programmes. This Unit also liaises with local HIV/AIDS service organisations.
and other resources within the community to ensure that public employees are informed about their services and referred to support structures; and is also responsible for creating a supportive and non-discriminatory working environment (DPE, 1999:2-3).

HIV/AIDS awareness activities, education, prevention, VCT, provision of protective equipment, as well as support and counselling are part of the DPE’s HIV/AIDS programme. Regular impact analyses of the HIV/AIDS pandemic should be conducted in order to understand the evolution of the impact and how it could affect the future of the DPE in terms of its structure, operations and functions. The DPE’s HIV/AIDS policy stipulates that the DPE has to allocate an adequate amount of money in the budget to ensure the full implementation of the provisions of the policy (DPE, 1999:3-4).

The DPE has met the requirement of producing an Education, Awareness and Prevention Programme. The first Friday of each month has been adopted as HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, during which HIV/AIDS awareness activities are carried out. These activities include information sharing sessions, the employees being addressed by persons living with HIV/AIDS and educational videos on HIV/AIDS. The DPE also participates in annual national HIV/AIDS events such as World AIDS Day and the Candle-light Memorial Service. Condom distribution forms part of the DPE’s Education, Awareness and Prevention Programme (DPE, 2002:2-3).

The DPE has an HIV/AIDS Committee that consists of eight representatives from all the units within the DPE. Members of this Committee meet on a monthly-basis. The Committee members have been trained on HIV/AIDS issues, especially those that relate to the workplace, as well as counselling. The DPE has recruited an Employee Assistance Programme practitioner who assists public employees with their personal problems, including HIV/AIDS-related problems, which may affect their ability to perform their duties effectively. The implementation of the HIV/AIDS programme is the responsibility of the Special Programmes Officer and the Director for Human Capacity Development. Sufficient financial resources have been allocated for the implementation of the DPE’s health promotion programme (Madlala, 2003). Even with all the initiatives promoting acceptance of HIV/AIDS in the workplace, there are still a number of challenges in the planning thereof.

CHALLENGES IN PLANNING INITIATIVES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF HIV/AIDS

According to Kuye, et al. (2002:148), the principles for effective planning include the interpretation of goals and objectives passed down from senior management, and formulating and issuing policies and procedures to accomplish goals and objectives. It also includes examining alternatives and selecting the activities and programmes that will lead to successful results, as well as establishing timeframes and completion targets in keeping with priorities. The identification of resources, i.e. human, financial and others, as well as the determination of the availability of such resources is also part of planning. For the purposes of the article, planning will be defined as the process of determining goals and objectives for responding to HIV/AIDS. It involves determining the activities that
will be implemented and allocating resources for the implementation of the activities that relate to the management of HIV/AIDS.

The DPE has experienced challenges in the planning process for the management of HIV/AIDS. Responding to a question posed to the research participants revealed that half (50%) of the employees are of the opinion that HIV/AIDS poses a threat to the ability of the DPE to achieve its goals and objectives. The other 50% of the respondents felt that HIV/AIDS is not a threat to service delivery in the DPE. Responses to this question indicate that a large number of employees within the DPE do not think that HIV/AIDS poses a threat to service delivery. This would make it difficult to achieve the participation of all employees in the HIV/AIDS workplace programme since a large number of them do not see the need to have such a programme.

The fact that half of the respondents stated that HIV/AIDS does not pose a risk to the Department’s ability to achieve its goals and objectives and be accountable for its mandate as a Public Service department means that selecting the mitigation of the impact of HIV/AIDS as a departmental objective is debatable. This may result in the HIV/AIDS workplace programme not being regarded as a priority during strategic planning and other activities in the Department. Planning for HIV/AIDS activities, as well allocating resources, both human and financial, for them is also a challenge if the programme is considered to be pointless and ineffective.

According to the DPSA (2002:23), HIV/AIDS will increase the need for the training of replacement employees, whilst at the same time compromising the potential for mentoring and transferring skills. The failure to provide appropriately trained replacements to meet the objectives of the DPE, combined with the lack of informed planning, the failure to adequately project the demand for new public employees and competition, especially from the private sector, could negatively impact on the operations of the DPE (Husain, 2002:16).

Determining activities that should be implemented for the management of HIV/AIDS within the Department would also be difficult if those that are responsible for planning do not have an idea of what they should consider as appropriate in terms of managing HIV/AIDS in the workplace. If a significant number of employees in the Department do not consider HIV/AIDS a risk to service delivery, it is difficult to figure out which activities are essential or appropriate for the HIV/AIDS workplace programme. The principles for effective planning include the interpretation of goals and objectives passed down from senior management (Kuye, et al. 2002:148), it is imperative for senior managers at the DPE to communicate the goals and objectives of the Department regarding HIV/AIDS in order to improve not only the planning process, but also facilitate appropriate organisation for the management of HIV/AIDS.

**Lack of information**

50% of the DPE employees are not aware that the DPE has a departmental HIV/AIDS policy. This means that the policy is not being sufficiently communicated to employees. An HIV/AIDS workplace policy is an essential part of an HIV/AIDS workplace programme.
since it gives a department’s position and attitude with regard to HIV/AIDS in the workplace. A policy states what a department is willing to commit itself to and what it will not do with regard to HIV/AIDS-related issues in the workplace. The effective communication of the departmental HIV/AIDS policy is crucial for the effective management of HIV/AIDS.

The DPE has experienced challenges in communication for HIV/AIDS. In total 62% of the employees are of the opinion that the HIV/AIDS awareness and education programme does not give them enough information on how they can protect themselves from getting infected with HIV. Only 38% of the respondents felt that the awareness and prevention programme in the Department provided them with adequate information for protecting themselves against infection.

The fact that 38% of employees within the Department are aware of the awareness and education programme on HIV/AIDS means that such a programme has been put in place, but the fact that 62% are not aware of it implies that the programme has not been sufficiently communicated to employees. Providing adequate information on how one can protect him/herself from being infected with HIV/AIDS is crucial for preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS. Such information should be communicated effectively to ensure that it is accessible to everyone in the Department.

Half (50%) of the DPE employees did not know that the DPE provides access to VCT for its employees. The fact that a large number of employees are not aware that the DPE has facilitated access to VCT to its employees means that the programme is not being well communicated to employees. VCT provides an opportunity for public employees to know their HIV statuses so that they can properly manage their health in case they test positive for HIV. The DPE facilitates its employees’ access to VCT, but half of the respondents reported that they were not aware of this.

The lack of adequate communication of the HIV/AIDS workplace programme within the DPE translates to inadequate planning of activities and interpretation of the goals and objectives for managing HIV/AIDS within the Department. The role of senior managers within the DPE in communicating policies and programmes that address HIV/AIDS-related issues and leading by example has evidently not been emphasised. Senior managers, as leaders in their respective departments, have an important role to play in ensuring the effectiveness of HIV/AIDS workplace programmes.

The involvement of senior managers in HIV/AIDS-related activities ensures the visibility of the HIV/AIDS workplace programmes and promotes awareness among public employees of the policies and programmes that have been put in place. The involvement of senior managers in HIV/AIDS workplace programmes also encourages the creation of an environment that is conducive to disclosure since it lets employees know the standpoint and attitude of senior management regarding HIV/AIDS.

Confidentiality and discrimination

Both the Constitution, 1996 and the Employment Equity Act, 1998 entrench an individual’s right to decide on revealing his/her HIV status. In most cases, this right
frustrates any planning to manage the disease since the extent of the epidemic cannot be properly measured, therefore making it difficult to manage the disease. Except for the annual HIV zero-prevalence tests among pregnant women attending public antenatal clinics, there is still no truly national surveillance system that adequately provides data on the prevalence and incidence of HIV/AIDS. The World Health Organisation (WHO) argues that it is important to have more accurate surveillance systems in order to improve the determination of health priorities and policy making (South African Reserve Bank, 2003:23).

Employee representatives and public employees’ concerns include the impact of HIV/AIDS on their employment, being discriminated on the basis of one’s HIV/AIDS status, having a safe working environment, ensuring that resources are available to meet the demands that are posed by the epidemic, and ensuring that appropriate prevention, treatment, care and support are provided for the public employee living with HIV/AIDS. Public managers are faced with the challenge of harmonising these often contradicting concerns (DPSA, 2002:38).

The DPE has a Health Promotion Programme that includes an Awareness and Education Programme on HIV/AIDS, yet none of the 135 public employees that are employed by the DPE have disclosed their HIV statuses. Madlala (2003) attributes this to the relatively small size of the Department and the fact that the DPE cannot offer treatment, counselling or any other service that may alleviate HIV/AIDS-related problems that are experienced by public employees who may choose to disclose their HIV statuses other than support. The DPE can only refer public employees to service providers for counselling as does not offer treatment for HIV/AIDS (anti-retroviral treatment) (Madlala, 2003).

As to the question whether the organisation provided a working environment supportive of employees infected with HIV/AIDS, 87% of the DPE employees indicated that the working environment is not conducive for the disclosure of one’s HIV status. The DPE has put in place a departmental HIV/AIDS policy and complies with the principles that are entrenched in the policy framework for managing HIV/AIDS in the Public Service (Public Service Regulations, 2001). These principles promote the non-discrimination of public employees who are infected with HIV/AIDS, a supportive working environment, education on HIV/AIDS, and the provision or facilitation of access to VCT and health and wellness management programmes. The fact that 87% of the respondents felt that the working environment within the DPE is not conducive for employees who are infected with HIV/AIDS to disclose their HIV statuses implies that the departmental HIV/AIDS policy and the principles that are entrenched in it have not been communicated to employees. This also implies that the organisational culture does not support openness and trust.

Statistical framework

In order to be able to run an HIV/AIDS workplace programme successfully, one needs to have a properly conceptualised statistical framework. The success of a programme depends on the statistics that are produced at the end of the programme. HIV/AIDS is surrounded by controversy, with the facts and figures relating to it being seldom in
agreement. It is therefore necessary to ensure that the content of the education, prevention and health promotion programme is accurate (Dutton and Michael, 2003:45).

The DPE’s Policy on HIV/AIDS and the policy framework for managing HIV/AIDS in the Public Service manifest the acknowledgement by the Public Service and the DPE of the seriousness of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and the impact it may have on service delivery and human resource management. Yet, no policy or guidelines can properly cover everything that might happen, nor can they take into account the complexity of human interactions and behaviour when confronted by HIV/AIDS. HIV/AIDS raises many emotions, especially fear and anger. Public employees who are responsible for implementing HIV/AIDS programmes are faced with the enormous challenge of handling people with care and compassion, but still make sure that the actions they take comply with departmental policies and guidelines (SAMDI, 2002:34).

The individual’s right to disclose his or her HIV/AIDS status may protect the individual from possible discrimination and stigmatisation, but it could be a serious challenge for the implementation of the Departmental HIV/AIDS Policy and performance management. If a public employee does not volunteer his or her HIV status to his or her supervisor, it may be difficult for the DPE to accommodate his or her special needs and offer support. If and when a public employee becomes ill and is unable to work effectively, and does not disclose his or her HIV/AIDS status, it may be difficult for his or her supervisors to approach the individual regarding his or her inability to perform. If public employees disclose their HIV statuses to their supervisors and colleagues, they could receive support from the DPE and also be able to re-organise their work schedules and performance agreements (SAMDI, 2002:41).

ADDRESSING THE PLANNING CHALLENGE: A QUESTION OF LEADERSHIP

In order for public employees to be able to feel comfortable in disclosing their HIV/AIDS status at the workplace, the DPE should create an enabling environment. The stigma that is associated with HIV/AIDS forces people to hide their illness in fear of being discriminated against by their colleagues (SAMDI, 2002:36).

Madlala (2005) argues that the working environment within the DPE is not conducive for disclosure due to the number of public employees (135) and the fact that line managers are not involved in the implementation of HIV/AIDS policy and health promotion programmes. Only the Director for Human Capacity Development and the Special Programmes Officer are actively involved in the management of HIV/AIDS within the DPE, which means that line managers do not take HIV/AIDS as a threat to service delivery (Madlala, 2005).

The DPE has experienced challenges in terms of leadership for its HIV/AIDS workplace programme. The evaluation of the leadership process for the planning of HIV/AIDS has revealed that 62% of the DPE employees were of the view that senior and line management in the DPE are not involved in the planning of HIV/AIDS. Responses to this question indicate that a majority of DPE employees felt that the management within the
DPE was not providing leadership for the HIV/AIDS workplace programme that is being implemented in the DPE.

Leadership is an important element for the effective management of HIV/AIDS. The active participation of senior management in the HIV/AIDS workplace programme within the DPE would encourage employees to participate and prove to them that management is interested in their well-being, thus creating a supportive and caring working environment. It must be borne in mind, though, that public employees holding senior management positions and those who are involved in the implementation of responses to HIV/AIDS also have a right not to disclose their HIV statuses. The success or failure of an HIV/AIDS workplace programme is a reflection of the attitudes of senior management towards the programme.

Both the Special Programmes Officer and the Director for Human Capital Development, who is a member of the SMS, are responsible for the implementation of the departmental HIV/AIDS programme. The role of the SMS member, as well as the activities that he/she is supposed to engage in, in the implementation of the programme is not clearly stated and this could result in the neglect of leadership responsibilities as well as the overlap and duplication of activities on the part of both the SMS member and the Special Programmes Officer. The role and responsibilities, as well as authority, of the departmental HIV/AIDS Committee have to be clearly defined.

The DPE is currently in the process of conducting a knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) study to ensure that its HIV/AIDS programme meets the needs of the public employees within the DPE. The appropriateness of the HIV/AIDS programme that is currently being implemented is also being monitored and evaluated with the assistance of the South African Quality Institute (SAQI) (Madlala, 2003).

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Increased public awareness on HIV/AIDS and scientific advances in prevention, treatment and care provide an improved opportunity for mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS in the Public Service and the community at large. Management responses to the epidemic would become relatively easier to plan for with the availability of accurate statistics on the prevalence of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

It is important for those individuals who are responsible for planning and implementing responses to HIV/AIDS within the DPE to have a thorough understanding of the HIV virus, how it is transmitted and how it transforms into AIDS. This understanding should be coupled with compassion and the realisation that compassion can be an element of enforcement.

HIV/AIDS demands innovative responses and collective action involving information exchange and joint problem solving. The potential impact of a collective effort could be more effective than a series of unconnected efforts. It is therefore important for the DPE to foster partnerships in the fight against HIV/AIDS with other government departments and the state-owned enterprises it monitors.

Communication between those that are responsible for implementing an HIV/AIDS workplace programme and all public employees within the DPE is crucial for the effectiveness of an HIV/AIDS workplace programme. This provides a platform for making
sure that the programme is responsive to the needs of the employees of the DPE. Other employees can provide those that are responsible for implementation ideas on how they can improve the programme. Creativity is also necessary for improving the way HIV/AIDS policies and programmes are communicated to employees to make sure that people obtain information on the HIV/AIDS policy in a way that provokes interest in the contents of the policy.

The importance of visible, enlightened and committed management is important in dealing with HIV/AIDS in the workplace. The efforts of the Director for Human Capacity Development around the management of HIV/AIDS need to be supplemented by the leadership of the Director-General or Deputy Director-General who would act as a champion or example for HIV/AIDS initiatives. Management could play a significant role in changing the mindset of public employees within the DPE regarding HIV/AIDS.

CONCLUSION

It is important that each Public Service department realises that the HIV/AIDS epidemic will have a negative impact on human resource management thus posing a threat to service delivery. The HIV/AIDS epidemic’s greatest impact is likely to be felt by individuals living with HIV/AIDS, the health sector and the poorest households. These individuals and households all depend on the Public Service to assist them in sustaining a livelihood.

By ensuring that state-owned enterprises operate effectively and efficiently as well as take into account the management of HIV/AIDS, the DPE would assist in ensuring that the problem of addressing HIV/AIDS does not solely fall upon the shoulders of government. Unless HIV/AIDS is tackled with the full range of resources that are at a nation’s disposal, development efforts, community initiatives and technical assistance will be constantly set back by the destructive progression of the disease. A co-operative effort by the multilateral system could enable the response to get ahead of the problem and bring about a real change in the rate and pattern of HIV infections.

The fact that HIV/AIDS is an issue that affects the very core of the operations of the Public Service cannot be disputed. The article has established the rationale for a Public Service workplace response to HIV/AIDS. The formulation and the implementation of the policy framework for managing HIV/AIDS in the Public Service as well as departmental policies and programmes on HIV/AIDS in Public Service departments, including the DPE, are signs that the threat that HIV/AIDS poses to service delivery is being taken seriously and that something is being done to mitigate this threat.

With leadership and proper planning, the epidemic can be managed and the Public Service can sustain service delivery to the benefit of members of the public, people living with HIV/AIDS and the population that is still free from HIV infection.

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