

Basotho Elderly Woman Struggles to Receive Social Services

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Augustina Mphomela was born in 1952 in Lesotho and came to South Africa to look for a better life than the situation her family was in back home. She misplaced her identity document some years back and now at almost 70 years old, Mphomela cannot go back to Lesotho nor can she get any social welfare support in South Africa. She currently stays in Zuurbekom, on the west rand of Johannesburg with only her neighbours to turn to.

On 8 May 2021, Mphomela, who is on chronic medication, was in very bad condition because she suffers from arthritis and hypertension and relies on neighbours for food. Her case was reported to the clinic manager and social workers on 19 May but unfortunately the social worker has not been able to assist her because she has no valid South African identity documents. The elderly lady also does not have a mobile phone to contact her family. Should Mphomela's condition get worse; there won't be any next of kin to inform and worse still should she pass away.

Philani Development Centre, a local Non Profit Organisation based in Zuurbekom, has been providing food parcels for Mphomela to survive but she cannot supplement this with a social grant. She is also not able to look for a job because of her age.

Even though the Zuurbekom clinic is helping Mphomela to receive the chronic medication she needs, she cannot be registered for the flu or COVID-19 vaccines or any other health and social service without her missing identity documents.

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