

28 August 2024

Dear Doctors and Colleagues,

## **URGENT WARNING | EXTORTION TARGETING DOCTORS**

We are writing to you to make you aware of a concerning extortion trend that is currently targeting doctors at Life Mercantile Hospital.

We have received reports that doctors are receiving telephone calls from an alleged 'hit man' who claims to have been hired to kill the doctor. The caller then demands a payment of R 5000.00 (this may vary) in exchange for the alleged telephonic recording of the people who have ordered the hit.

Our doctors, employees, healthcare workers and patient safety is of paramount importance to us and we are engaging with the building owners, SKG, to discuss measures to improve security in the hospital.

In the meantime, we wish to advise all of our doctors of the following key points to remember:

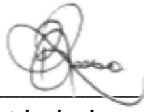
1. **Stay calm:** should you receive a phone call as described above, try to stay calm. If you are able to record the call, do so without alerting the caller. If the caller ID is visible keep the number – take a screenshot of the number or save it on your phone.
2. **Pay attention:** try to remember all the details of the conversation as well as the general description of the caller – gender, accent, background noise – if any etc.
3. **Do not engage** in any argument or altercation with the caller. Do not provide any personal information or make any payments.
4. **Report immediately:** contact your nearest police station or any law enforcement authorities to report the incident. Provide them with as much information as possible including the phone number from which the call was received.
5. **Inform the hospital:** notify the hospital immediately so that we can take appropriate measures and offer support.
6. **Stay informed:** familiarise yourself with the nature of such scams to better recognise and avoid them.

We encourage you to stay vigilant when entering/ leaving the hospital and while driving. Kindly report anything that is suspicious or alarming to the security officers on site or to the hospital manager.

**The Eastern Cape South African Police Service is aware of extortionate calls being made to businesses and has established a 24 hour hotline for reporting these incidents. Please save this number – 082 387 1561. You can also contact Brigadier Lutuli on 082 301 1530 who is on the above task force.**

Our team is available to support you. If you have any concerns or require further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards,



28.08.24

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Pat Lubobo

Hospital Manager

Life Mercantile Hospital

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