

SADAG raises alarm over dire state of SA's psychiatric facilities

The South African Depression and Anxiety Group (Sadag) has raised concerns over the state of the country's psychiatric facilities.



Source: [Pexels](#)

This follows reports revealing that psychiatric patients at the Charlotte Maxeke Academic Hospital in Johannesburg are facing dreadful conditions.

Sadag says there aren't enough public mental-health institutions in the country, forcing hospitals to overcrowd the psychiatric wards due to capacity constraints.

Data from 2019 discloses that of the people living with mental illness, 85% of them depend on public-health institutions, and that only 18 beds are available for every 100,000 people. Children and adolescents only receive 1% of these beds.

Underfunding has contributed to a huge mental-health staff and bed shortage, says the Department of Health.

Reports highlight that the department has set aside just 5% of the total public healthcare budget for mental-healthcare expenditure in its seven-year strategy released this year and that there is a desperate shortage of in-patient beds: Mpumalanga, for example, has no psychiatric hospitals and doctors there have to refer patients to Gauteng.

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