



Rural Doctors Association of Southern Africa

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Press Statement: RuDASA supports #FeesMustFall

Rural Doctors Association of Southern Africa (RuDASA) stands in solidarity with the non-violent, united student movement currently known as #FeesMustFall. The groundswell of activism demonstrated by students exposes an obvious structural elitism. This struggle is about human dignity and equal access for everyone, and it affects us all.

We know that health science students from rural areas are beacons for their communities and more likely to return to serve and lead these communities. However rural students are underrepresented at tertiary institutions and denied access precisely because of poverty and the vicious cycle this creates in preventing access to financial aid. All this amidst numerous other access challenges such as inadequacy of rural schooling, lack of support and mentoring and an absence of role models. This movement is representative of a class struggle that recognises one of the roots of social exclusion: lack of access to higher education. Therefore we choose to add our voices to this movement, for rural students and graduates who persevere despite loans, debt and financial constraints hanging over their heads, and rural communities battling in the face of the human resources for health crisis.

As former president Nelson Mandela once said, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." In post-apartheid South Africa, being rural should not be a barrier to education, upliftment and breaking the cycle of poverty.

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The Rural Doctors Association of Southern Africa (RuDASA) strives to inspire others towards rural healthcare in South Africa. Our aim is to support and empower those committed to making health care available to all South Africans.

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