

Soweto hospital in dramatic film

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Medics volunteer skills to ease Baragwanath nightmare



A DRAMATIC documentary about the horrors of Soweto's Chris Hani-Baragwanath Hospital has spurred overseas doctors to offer their assistance to the hospital.

- **VIDEO: Saving Soweto trailer**
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GxyPi1n8X24>
- **New lifts for Gauteng hospitals**
<http://www.thetimes.co.za/News/Article.aspx?id=917341>

Called Saving Soweto and created by South African filmmakers Lisa Henry and Shareen Anderson, the eight-part documentary is set in the 429 buildings and 10km of Bara's corridors.

It exposes the blood and gore of the overcrowded hospital, which serves more than 4-million people.

The first episode, titled "24 hours of trauma", shows the overworked doctors and nurses as they deal with the multitude of health issues presented to them by the patients streaming into the hospital in numbers that overwhelm its resources.

It was broadcast on Al Jazeera, an international actuality channel, last week.

The programme has sparked worldwide reaction from doctors who want to volunteer their services to the 3000-bed hospital.

"We have received so much feedback from doctors in Australia and some in the US, asking how they can help," said Henry.

One emergency medical technician from the US, known only as "Nadar", sent an e-mail to Henry saying: " I am American citizen. I have seen Saving Soweto on YouTube. It made me very emotional and sad. I would like to come there and volunteer for the hospital. "

Said Henry: " We care about this place and it could use all the help it can get from doctors."

She said that the aim of the documentary was to make people "walk in the shoes of the staff of Bara. The hospital is a microcosm of South Africa. Patients spend hours waiting for treatment because the facility is understaffed," Henry said.

- Watch the repeat of part one of Saving Soweto on Al Jazeera (DStv channel 406) today at 12.30pm. Part two will be broadcast on January 16, at 00.30am.