Barbara Hogan Replaced as South African Health Minister

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Aaron Motsoaledi was tapped by new South African President Jacob Zuma to be the new health minister and guide the nation through the global HIV crisis, Agence France-Presse reports.

According to the article, Motsoaledi replaces Barbara Hogan, who was applauded for not conforming to the denialist policies of former president Thabo Mbeki and his health minister, Manto Tshabala-Msimang. Better known as “Dr. Beetroot,” Tshabala-Msimang promoted eating vegetables as an effective form of HIV treatment over antiretrovirals.

While Zuma has full confidence in Motsoaledi, AIDS activists are concerned because Motsoaledi is a relatively unknown provincial politician. In addition, they believe constant changes in a ministry that’s infamous for disorganization would not help the nation focus on relieving the dilemma of 5.7 million South Africans living with HIV.

“We have an entirely new political team responsible for health at a time where the health system is in critical need of resuscitation and in need of continuity and understanding,” said Mark Heywood, spokesman for the Treatment Action Campaign.

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