

Govt using private health care report to justify NHI – FF Plus – Politics Web 2 October 2019

Philip van Staden |

FF Plus distances itself from Dhlomo's statements about Competition Commission's report

The FF Plus distances itself from the statements made by the chairperson of the parliamentary portfolio committee for Health, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo, that the Competition Commission's report on its market research into the private health care industry indicates that reform is needed and that an entirely new order must be established in South Africa's health care sector.

Dr Dhlomo made these statements on behalf of the portfolio committee after he welcomed the report, which was issued on Monday.

The FF Plus is a member of the portfolio committee and does not agree with the chairperson's statements.

The FF Plus is still busy scrutinising the Commission's report, but at this stage, it seems as if the ANC government is using the report as a stick with which to beat the private health care sector in an attempt to justify the implementation of the National Health Insurance (NHI).

The FF Plus is convinced that the public health care system is facing extensive problems and that the private health care industry is, thus, vital for the survival of health care services in South Africa.

Without private health care, general health care in South Africa will collapse. A question that arises is why the Competition Commission is only releasing the report now, after it was initiated in 2014 already, now that the government is eager to implement the NHI.

Supporters of the NHI are now using this report to try and cover up the extremely poor condition of the public health care system by redirecting the spotlight away and focusing it on the private health care system.

All the private health care sector's shortcomings are being pointed out while not nearly as much emphasis is put on the public health care system, which has already collapsed. The government is turning a blind eye to its own mistakes and is using this report to try and shift all the blame to the private sector.

The FF Plus also considers Dr Dhlomo's statements to be extremely premature seeing as the public participation process has not even begun yet.

Dr Dhlomo's statements seem to be paving the way for the committee to simply adopt the NHI Bill, regardless of the input from the public participation process.

This in itself already creates a problem, because the chairperson, who is a member of the ANC, cannot make statements or decisions on behalf of the members of other parties.

It casts a shadow of doubt on the public participation process. The FF Plus has already tabled a motion in Parliament requesting a debate on the collapse of the public health care system and the high number of inexplicable deaths that occur in the industry.

Issued by Philip van Staden, FF Plus MP and chief spokesperson: Health, 2 October 2019