

NEHAWU welcomes the launch of the Health Sector Anti-Corruption Forum — Politicsweb 2 October 2019

The National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union [NEHAWU] welcomes the health sector anti-corruption forum that was launched by President Cyril Ramaphosa yesterday in Pretoria. The purpose of the forum is to fight fraud and corruption in the health sector.

As NEHAWU, we hold a strong view that the launch of the forum is long overdue and will play a critical role in uprooting the scourge of corruption that is currently engulfing the health sector. The national union agrees with the President that corruption in the healthcare sector is not a victimless crime as it affects the most vulnerable members of our society who are denied access to quality healthcare by corrupt elements who are hell-bent on lining their pockets while crippling the healthcare sector.

The launch of this forum is more welcomed as we are anticipating the full implementation of the National Health Insurance which will guarantee universal access for all regardless of their ability to pay. The forum must allay fears of those who believe that the NHI will not succeed because of corruption.

NEHAWU as a union organising in the health sector has been at the forefront of exposing corruption especially in supply management, procurement, servicing of medical equipment, human resources and corrupt activities associated with outsourcing. We hope the forum will hit the ground running in dealing with all cases of tender irregularities, bribery and fraudulent activities.

We hope that the inclusion of the Special Investigative Unit [SIU], the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation, the Financial Intelligence Centre, and the National Prosecuting Authority [NPA] will enable the forum to investigate and prosecute those found to be on the wrong side of the law.

As a trade union, through our members we have on several occasions submitted information to authorities on corruption and maladministration which has been ignored in many instances. We have consistently campaigned against corrupt managers and institutions through our public service delivery campaign. Whilst corrupt deals may take place in covert elite rendezvous, some of the manifestations of such corrupt deals practically occur in workplaces. Therefore, the active involvement of trade unions in this forum is essential as corruption can only be undermined by a concerted effort, involving key constituencies. It's regrettable that labour as a constituency has been excluded from the forum. We call on the President to consider including Labour as watchdogs in the workplace. We commit ourselves to continue the fight against corruption and maladministration.

NEHAWU is looking forward to working hand in glove with the forum in fighting to totally displace corruption from the health sector and call on our members and all South Africans in general to report any form of corruption wherever it rears its ugly head.

Issued by Khaya Xaba, National Spokesperson, NEHAWU, 2 October 2019