

## Have your say on NHI Bill in October - IOL – 22 September 2019

Cape Town - Public hearings on the National Health Insurance (NHI) Bill will start towards the end of October, Parliament said on Sunday.

Official communications had been sent to all political parties represented in the National Assembly informing them of the start of countrywide public hearings on the NHI Bill, health portfolio committee chairman Sibongiseni Dhlomo said in a statement.

The purpose of "writing to all political parties is to make sure that they inform their constituencies about the public hearings", he said.

The bill aimed "to achieve universal access to quality health care services in South Africa in accordance with section 27 of the Constitution, to establish a National Health Insurance Fund and to set out its powers, functions, and governance structures, and to provide a framework for the strategic purchasing of health care services by the fund on behalf of users".

The bill further aimed to "create mechanisms for equitable, effective, and efficient utilisation of the resources of the fund to meet the health needs of the population, to preclude or limit undesirable, unethical, and unlawful practices in relation to the fund and its users, and to provide for matters connected herewith", Dhlomo said.

The public hearings would start in Mpumalanga from October 25 to 28. Thereafter, the committee would move to the Northern Cape for hearings from November 1 to 4.

Information about public hearings in other provinces would be communicated timeously before they began. The public engagement process would also take place on weekends to accommodate people unavailable during the week. Venues, days, and times would be communicated closer to the start of the hearings.

"I urge all people to read the pamphlets distributed by the department of health so that they can educate themselves about how the NHI will benefit all South Africans. The information is critical in order to assist the committee to contribute to the bill," Dhlomo said.

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