

Nehawu embarks on campaign to support NHI – The Citizen 18 October 2019

‘We call on private hospitals to stop offering our patients expensive treatment when there are affordable ones that can work,’ the union says.

In support of the government’s proposed National Health Insurance (NHI) Bill, which aims to give universal health coverage and prioritize primary healthcare, the National Education, Health and Allied Workers’ Union (Nehawu) launched a campaign that will focus on transformation of the healthcare system and mobilisation of society against the current mode of production in healthcare.

The union also held a picket at Netcare Headquarters in Sandton on Friday. The union’s aim was to show support for NHI and to protest lack of competition in the private providers market, market power and for the predominant pricing mechanism used in private health, to be Fee-For-Service.

“This protest picket is the first in the series of a range of other actions that are in the pipeline, which we shall mount with other organisations to ensure that the prevalent profiteering in the private health industry is stopped. To this extent, the private provider industry shall continue to operate under the NHI,” Mavuso said.

Deputy General Secretary of Nehawu December Mavuso said they started at Netcare as it is the biggest among private hospital groups in South Africa, and also operates a primary healthcare emergency service through Netcare 911.

“Nehawu is prioritising the implementation of NHI and we must go back to the community and educate our people about NHI. We are outraged of what is happening at the expense of patients. We call on private hospitals to stop offering our patients expensive treatment when there are affordable ones that can work. We also call on specialists and doctors to respect their ethics,” Mavuso said.

He also stressed the importance of a campaign that seeks to highlight and promote practical alternatives and delivering quality service to improve the health system and the health of the working class.

“The campaign aims to create awareness and build a society that plays an active role in healthcare rather than fully relying on the healthcare system for a cure for ailments that can be prevented,” the union said in a statement.

Netcare Director of Strategy and Health Policy Melanie da Costa said Netcare was looking forward to partner with government towards the successful implementation of the NHI.

“Netcare is committed to working with all parties to make quality care accessible to all people in our country. We also fully appreciate the need to assess efficiencies in the healthcare system in the interest of extending access to healthcare,” Da Costa said.

On behalf of Netcare, a memorandum was accepted by their Human Relations director Peter Warrener. Chief Director of Health Advocate Maile Ngake was there to accept the memorandum on behalf of the department of health.

For more news your way, download The Citizen's app for [iOS](#) and [Android](#).