

Gauteng medical negligence claims increase to R29 billion

- Politicsweb 29 January 2020

Gauteng medical negligence claims have increased from R21.7 billion in 2017/18 to R28.91 billion in 2018/19 according to the latest edition of the SA Health Review which cites previously unpublished Treasury figures.

This is a very worrying 33% increase in claims which now total more than half of last year's R50.8 billion Gauteng health budget.

It stands in sharp contrast to the Western Cape where medico-legal claims are only R110 million.

Last year, from April to September, the Gauteng Health Department paid out R424 million for 54 medico-legal cases. This has crippled cash flow as law companies have resorted to attaching the Department's bank accounts to ensure payment.

There is a terrible human cost in these negligence cases for which no amount of money can be a real compensation.

The continuing rise in claims shows that hospital conditions are not improving in Gauteng, which is ill-prepared for Government's proposed National Health Insurance (NHI).

Firm steps are needed to improve the quality of care in Gauteng hospitals to ensure they are places of healing rather than further injury inflicted on patients.

Issued by Jack Bloom, DA Gauteng Shadow Health MEC, 29 January 2020