

NHI aligns with the new vision of Growing Gauteng Together - health MEC – News24 28 February 2020

Gauteng Health MEC Bandile Masuku says the introduction of the National Health Insurance (NHI) aligns with the new vision of Growing Gauteng Together.

"The NHI will ensure that we have sufficient funding to improve healthcare outcomes in a manner that reaffirms the self-evident truth that life is of equal worth and that quality healthcare restores human dignity," Masuku said during the State of the Province Address debate on Thursday.

The NHI aims to give "universal quality healthcare services to all South Africans, irrespective of their socio-economic backgrounds".

"The NHI is the single most important and revolutionary public policy reform since 1994. It is a source of unity and not division.

"It aims to bridge the age-old social divides that have always characterised our society," Masuku explained, adding Gauteng was the ideal place to pioneer many of the proposed provisions of the NHI Bill.

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In its strategy to turn Gauteng health around, the department increased the number of facilities that are ideal for the NHI.

In addition, Masuku said the filling of critical vacant posts was near completion, upgrades on 10 priority hospitals were being rolled out and the improvement of clinical governance was under way, among others.

"We are not standing up to please or seek approval from those who stand opposed to the ideal of Growing Gauteng.

"We are merely reminding our people of the commitments we have made to build a better Gauteng, South Africa and Africa through quality healthcare for our people," he added.

According to research, there is a strong relationship between growth, healthcare and human development, and Masuku is of the view that the puzzle should be completed with the necessary ingredients to ensure the South African model of universal health coverage will be successful.

'Sentiments of the people'

"We have abundant human capital, we have the capacity to revitalise old infrastructure and build new ones and now, through the NHI, the puzzle will be complete as we recapitalise healthcare funding in a manner to affirm the principle that life is of equal worth and to pursue the NHI is to secure human dignity for the vast majority," he said.

Masuku reiterated the department was not asking for permission from those who "stand opposed to the Gauteng of our dreams".

"We are merely standing up to echo the sentiments of the people of Gauteng who voted with their feet during the NHI public hearings a few days ago.

"Do not be misled by the noisy airwaves and rented opinions, the people of Gauteng are unanimous. The principles of the NHI bind us all and we shall experience universal health coverage in our lifetime, and nothing shall stop us," he concluded.