

# **Medical aids, doctors and government are meeting to discuss the NHI – these are the biggest problems -[SA News2](#)**

March 2020

The Minister of Health, Dr Zweli Mkhize, has called on the National Health Insurance (NHI) Ministerial Advisory Committee (MAC), war room participants and several international experts to craft a road map that will set targets for the implementation of the NHI.

The minister made the call on Monday in Johannesburg, where he addressed an NHI workshop and expert group meeting on the implementation of the NHI in the country.

The four-day workshop kicked-off on Monday and considered matters raised in public hearings, inputs made directly to the Health Department, media reports and conversations since the bill was published in August 2019.

“I want this workshop to help us with the road map, which [should] basically say when we can achieve [what by when].

“It will also allow us space to share some of the areas which we believe might be thorny, where we need to focus and get certain answers on how we take the process forward,” said the Minister.

Through the NHI, government aims to pool funds to provide access to quality, affordable personal health services for all South Africans based on their health needs, irrespective of their socio-economic status.

The NHI seeks to realise universal health coverage for all South Africans. This means that every South African will have the right to access healthcare services free of charge at the point of care at accredited health facilities such as clinics, hospitals and private health practitioners.

Since the NHI Bill was published, political parties, communities, labour, civil rights organisations, medical schemes, doctors and pharmaceutical suppliers have made their voices heard.

Concerns raised on the bill varied from:

- Resource capacity in terms of medicines and equipment;
- Inadequate numbers of staff at facilities;
- Labour unrest;
- Corruption;
- Poor management.

In light of the concerns raised by the various stakeholders, the high-level workshop will thrash out the veracity and implications of the matters raised.

“There are number of areas that are difficult, which we all have to navigate through and are likely to give us real challenges... The issues relate to the private sector and business interests. That is the area

where we need to find tactful ways of managing... We also (need to) look at the scope of... flexibility... and areas that are open to negotiation,” said Mkhize.

Upon conclusion of the workshop, a report is set to be drafted, which will address NHI implementation concerns.