

EFF proposes new hospital rules for South Africa – Business Tech 7 October 2020

The Economic Freedom Fighters presented its National Health Amendment Bill to parliament on Wednesday (7 October), detailing the proposed changes.

First mooted in 2018, the bill aims to make it mandatory for public sector clinics to remain open 24 hours a day.

“Health service challenges are not limited to specific time periods and can afflict a person at any time of day or night,” the party said.

“Millions of South Africans are denied their right to have access to health services as enshrined in the Bill of Rights because an insufficient number of health facilities are open after hours, thus denying these South Africans access to health facilities should they fall sick or become injured after hours.”

The EFF said that people do not only get sick or suffer injury during the day when healthcare facilities, especially clinics, are open.

“Many South Africans live too far from hospitals and are therefore unable to access healthcare establishments all the time. Clinics are in most instances the most effective health establishment to access.”

In its presentation on Wednesday, the EFF said that Section 4 (3) of the current National Health Act makes provisions for the kind of services clinics and community health centres provide, but this does not include operating hours.

The proposed legislation follows a push by the ANC-led government to make healthcare more affordable in South Africa.

Notably, this will include the introduction of a National Health Insurance (NHI) scheme, which will effectively subsidise a large part of healthcare in the country in an effort to make it more accessible.