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NOTICE Private Practice Review presents the reader with a summary of the most relevant breaking news in the local and global healthcare industry, as obtained from media sources, including the public broadcaster, independent television broadcasters, independent news agencies, newspapers, radio and news sites. HealthMan strives to quote the Original Source. HealthMan compiles this information to provide the reader with a brief overview of the most recent events and developments as they are reported in the media. The views and opinions expressed in Private Practice Review are those of the authors of the media sources and do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of HealthMan, its directors, employees and associates.

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT (\rightarrow)

OPINION: Covid-19 is accelerating changes in healthcare



Covid-19 has accelerated changes already afoot in the medical profession in ways we will probably only really start seeing in five to 10 years, wrote Marion Morkel, chief medical officer at Sanlam in *Business Day* (23 August 2021).

"The pandemic has laid stark the terrible inequalities in access to healthcare, highlighted issues in supply chains and staffing, opened debates regarding private and public sector responsibilities and left many medical professionals wondering whether they can continue to serve. Already, 20% to 30%t of the US's healthcare workers are considering leaving the profession. Four in 10 nurses are contemplating leaving their roles as well.

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The new normal for healthcare and its effect on the economy

"The global economy is projected to grow at 6% in 2021 and 4.9% in 2022. After a year where a new respiratory virus left the world bruised and battered, at first glance these numbers look like the promise of a new beginning and new hope. The reality is much more nuanced and complicated, which became clear when the International Monetary Fund (IMF) revised the detail around its global economic outlook in July this year," wrote Janette Clark of *MoneyWeb* (17 August 2021).

According to the IMF's outlook document, vaccine access and vaccination rollout remains the most critical issue for global economic recovery.

To read more, click on the button below



NEWS ON GOVERNMENT (\rightarrow)

Relief scheme established for destroyed, affected or looted workplaces



On August 10, the Minister of Employment and Labour, TW Nxesi, gazetted regulations to establish a temporary financial relief scheme for workers who have lost income due to the partial or full closure of workplaces destroyed, damaged, looted or otherwise affected by the recent unrest. An employer who had to close its business due to the unrest must apply for temporary financial relief for, and on behalf of, its affected employees by reporting the closure of the workplace as a result of the unrest in accordance with the UIF's application procedure.

The employer must satisfy the following requirements:

- It must be registered with the UIF;
- Its closure must be directly linked to the destruction, damage or looting of its workplace;
- It must confirm, in writing or electronically, that it accepts the terms of the scheme; • It must provide details of the destruction or damage to, or the looting of, its workplace and submit documentary proof of a report to the South African Police
- Services and proof that a case has been opened with a case number; and If insured, the employer should also submit proof of submission and acknowledgement of receipt of the insurance claim.



More than 100 foreigntrained doctors take HPCSA to court over registration

More than 100 doctors - trained overseas - who have been blocked by the HPCSA from practising in SA - have launched urgent court proceedings in a bid to be registered as medical professionals, reported Medical Brief (19 August 2021).

The HPCSA has not invited them to sit the required examinations nor does it answer their inquiries, the applicants claim. The group - some of whom have been in limbo since 2019 – want to interdict the HPCSA and the Medical and Dental Professional Board from invoking the provisions of the New Pathway Policy Guideline for foreign-trained doctors, adopted in June last year, which prevents them from writing their qualifying exams. The doctors said in court papers that they simply wanted to write the required clinical exams required for foreign-trained doctors, scheduled for next month. The HPCSA, however, is refusing to enrol them for this. All of the applicants are South African citizens and have graduated from medical training institutions base

HPCSA boss placed on suspension - again Health Minister Joe Phaahla has suspended CEO and registrar of the Health Professions Council of SA (HPCSA) David Motau a second time, for allegedly not disclosing that he was implicated in a criminal investigation when he applied for the position. According to Times Live (26 August) Phaahla states in a letter to Motau that "in addition to the criminal charges that the state has levelled against you, you failed to state the existence of a criminal investigation against you by the SA Police Service when you should have done so". Motau is charged with contravening the Public Finance

Management Act.

Doctors anxious over backlogs following order regarding CPD

in China, Mauritius, Romania, Ukraine and Malaysia.



Some doctors have warned their regulator, the SA Health Profession's Council (HPCSA), against creating an "administrative nightmare" that could potentially delay doctor registrations and cost medics even more in future, reported *TimesLIVE* (17 August 2021).

This follows the HPCSA's decision to make it mandatory for doctors to submit records of their continuous professional development (CPD) activities. Doctors allege that - during the Covid-19 pandemic - the HPCSA has introduced a new online portal that makes the submission of these documents mandatory, resulting in backlogs at the council.

- According to SA Medical Association (SAMA) chairperson, Dr Angelique Coetzee, the doctor unions remain concerned about approval delays, and are currently working with the HPCSA to fast-track the processing of these essential documents. HPCSA spokesperson, Christopher Tsatsawane, said the HPCSA "plans to clear
- the CPD backlog soon".

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An introduction to Probitec (3m:33): https://youtu.be/ G217pgrhJkw

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Video 2

Viideo 3

FOCUS ON: VACCINE HESSITANCY (\rightarrow)



Video 1

'Vaccine hesitancy? No, government failure'

"The media, both social and otherwise, have been full of the irresponsible rantings of a well-known health professional against the Covid-19 vaccination... And rightly so. But I believe the reasons for the reduction in vaccine uptake in the past weeks have little to do with hard anti-vax sentiment and far more to do with

lack of information and access," wrote **Dr Bridget Farham**, editor of the **South African Medical Journal** (SAMJ) in Daily Maverick (17 August 2021)

"We have endured draconian restrictions and lockdowns which have done nothing to prevent infection and deaths. Our current lockdown regulations did nothing to the current trajectory of the virus, which is simply following a natural course and will subside again once a substantial portion of the population has been infected," wrote Farham.

She concludes:

"We need to vaccinate as many vulnerable people as possible now. The lack of uptake in vaccine centres is not due to the tirades of a few radical anti-vaxxers. It is due to a systematic lack of engagement by a government that has lost track of the needs of our population, solely focused on its own narrow agenda. We need information, widely disseminated, in as many forms as possible, right now."

Side effects a key concern

According to a report by UJ/HSRC Covid-19 Democracy



the fear of Covid-19 vaccine side-effects is the most significant driving force behind vaccine hesitancy in SA. - *News24* (19 August 2021).

The reported stated that:

- Distrust in government and international institutions like the World Health
- Organisation (WHO) is a reason why people are vaccine-hesitant;
- Religious objections and conspiracy theories together only accounted for 4% of explanations for vaccine hesitancy;
- The majority of those that express hesitation about taking the vaccine are not antiscience but are expressing rational and legitimate doubts about a new vaccine;.
- Improved public health messaging regarding the concerns expressed by hesitant people could change their minds;
- Younger people were more likely to be vaccine-hesitant, due to their concerns over side-effects, and the effectiveness of the vaccine;
- The researchers recommended "public health messaging may need to target the platforms that young people most engage in for information, details of which are provided in the accompanying report to this one"; and

The report stated 72% of the participants indicated they either had already been vaccinated or they definitely or probably would take the Covid-19 jab.

> Click on the button below to also read: Should anti-vaxxers submit to mandatory weekly Covid-19 tests?

> > Daily Maverick (26 August 2021)

Read More

(\rightarrow) **FINANCIAL NEWS**



'Dis-Chem founders want to sell stake to black investors'

Fin24 reported on August 24 that the Saltzman family, which founded Dis-Chem in 1978, is selling 7,5% of its shareholding to "invited investors". Another 10.05% will be sold to a consortium of yet-unnamed BEE investors, and 3.75% will be sold to senior executives, including the incoming CEO Rui Morais, who will succeed Ivan Saltzman.

"The company will announce the final arrangement when it presents its interim financial results in November. If the BEE transaction succeeds, all the transactions together will reduce the family's shareholding to 31.4% and they will not sell their share for at least 360 days. The family will remain the biggest shareholder in the company. Saltzman said that the transactions will provide greater liquidity in the trading of Dis-Chem shares and incentivise executives.

Private hospital groups worth the investment

SA's three largest private hospital groups are still attractive investments, despite the scars of an on-going battle with Covid-19, reported Fin24 (24 August 2021).



According to Jithen Pillay, investment analyst at Allan Gray, private hospital groups traditionally have "attractive features", and are fairly defensive, with demand that doesn't tend to fluctuate cyclically, despite the tough run they have had with Covid-19.

Zaid Paruk, a portfolio manager and analyst at Aeon Investment Management, said in the last 12 months, Life Healthcare's share price increased by more than 40%, followed by Netcare at almost 28% and Mediclinic trailing behind with a 6% rise.

"Netcare also had a strong investment case because it had additional capital, a strong balance sheet, and it could, for example, have higher dividends and do share buy backs that could lead to a good outcome." Regarding Mediclinic, Paruk said the group should benefit from its regional

diversification, with its operations in the UAE, Switzerland and South Africa.



Big Pharma commits R20-m to rebuild looted pharmacies

Pharmaceutical companies have committed to a R20-m fund to help rebuild and restock at least 84 pharmacies, mainly in KZN, ravaged during last month's unrest. They include Aspen Pharmacare, Zydus Healthcare, Adcock Ingram, Bidvest, Discovery, Austell Pharmaceuticals and Transpharm.

The Independent Community Pharmacy Association (ICPA) has commissioned business rescue practitioners Covid Business Rescue Assistance (Cobra) to help rebuild and restock pharmacies, as well as provide business support and assistance through its 100 partner organisations, which include management consultants, lawyers, financial advisers and IT experts. Cobra is South Africa's largest non-profit organisation for distressed businesses.

PHARMACEUTICAL NEWS (\rightarrow)

Health Minister urged to get backup vaccines for Pfizer and J&J



"The ministerial advisory council (MAC) on vaccines has recommended to Health Minister Joe Phaahla that efforts be made to secure AstraZeneca and Sinovac Biotech vaccines in the event of a potential shortage of the Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson (J&J) doses," reported *Reuters* (12 August 2021).

According to MAC member, Prof, Greg Hussey of the UCT Vaccines for Africa Initiative, SA would probably have enough J&J and Pfizer vaccines for all South Africans by the end of 2021 or early 2022. However, unforeseen events, like the recent contamination of J&J vaccine at its US plant and the shortage of vaccines due to a halt in exports from the Serum Institute of India, lead to the MAC recommending the possibility of getting one or two of these vaccines as potential backups.

• A new laboratory study has shown that antibodies triggered by Sinovac Biotech's Covid-19 vaccine declined below a key threshold from about six months after a second dose for most recipients, but a third shot had a strong booster effect.

32-m J&J vaccines exported to Europe, while SA is waiting According to an exposé by the New York Times 32-m vaccines produced at the Aspen plant in Gqeberha in the Eastern Cape have been sent to European countries while SA was still waiting for its order from J&J. - Times Live, 18 August 2021. Apparently the confidential contract that SA signed with J&J waived its right to impose export restrictions on the vaccines produced in the country. Fatima Hassan of the Health Justice Initiative said they would be launching an application to get full disclosure of the contract between the government and J&J.



Drugmakers to rake in billions Drug makers Pfizer, BioNTech and Moderna Inc are expected to reap billions of dollars from Covid-19 booster shots in a market that could rival the \$6-bn (about R88bn) in annual sales for flu vaccines for years to come, reported *Reuters* (15 August 2021).

"Analysts have forecast revenue of more \$6.6-bn for the Pfizer/ BioNTech shot and \$7.6-bn for Moderna in 2023, mostly from booster sales. The annual market is expected to reach around \$5-bn or higher, with additional drugmakers competing for those sales. The vaccine makers say that evidence of waning antibody levels in vaccinated people after six months, as well as an increasing rate of breakthrough infections in countries hit by the Delta variant support the need for booster shots.

"If regular Covid-19 boosters are needed among the general population, the market would most resemble the flu shot business, which distributes more than 600-m doses per year."

GENERAL NEWS (\rightarrow)

SA company to manufacture Covid-19 rapid test kits

The South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA) has authorised a local biotechnology company, CapeBio, to manufacture rapid test kits for Covid-19.



The test kits, co-developed by CapeBio and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), will help to reduce SA's reliance on imports, making it easier for the country to gain speedy access to test kits, reported *TimesLive* (17 August 2021).

Daniel Ndima, CEO of CapeBio, said the company has already commenced industrial scale manufacturing of the test kits at its Centurion facilities, and the first batches will be available for local market uptake before the end of August. At full capacity, the company will be able to produce up to 5 000 kits a day, with each kit providing for 1 000 tests.

Coronavirus Update: (30 August 2021)

South Africa: Worldwide: Total cases reported: 2,76-m Total cases reported: 217s-m Deaths: 81 595 Deaths: 4,51-m

NEWS ON MEDICAL SCHEMES (\rightarrow)



Hard times ahead for Medical Schemes

"Consumers should prepare themselves for a rude awakening, as medical schemes are struggling to balance the costs of the Covid-19 pandemic. This could result in a period of rate hikes higher than the usual above-inflation increases,"

wrote Jonathan Faurie on Money Web (26 August 2021).

"With experts predicting that full recovery from the pandemic may only be achieved in 2024, and a possible two-year period of medical schemes balancing Covid cases as well as normal surgical claims, medical schemes will be looking to financially recover from the pandemic."

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SPECIAL NOTES (\rightarrow)

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