HealthMan
PRIVATE PRACTICE REVIEW

NOTICE

Private Practice Review (www.healthman.co.za) is a monthly electronic publication for healthcare practitioners in South Africa. It is intended to keep readers informed of developments in healthcare industry, including the public sector, especially where these impact on private healthcare practice. Although we do our best to ensure that the information we provide is accurate and complete, we do not accept responsibility for any loss or damage that may arise from reliance on the information contained in this publication. Nothing in this publication should be construed as advice. Readers should consult their own professional advisers in the exercise of their own judgment. Private Practice Review is a trademark of HealthMan (Pty) Ltd, Cape Town, South Africa.

In this Newsletter

Food for Thought
News from Government
Financial News
Pharmaceutical News
News from Medical Schemes
CMS Circulars
Special Notes

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Focus on 2023 Budget and implementing NHI

NHI Bill needs major revision

At the build-up to the 2024 elections, the ANC's NPs are in a hurry to implement National Health Insurance despite an acknowledgement even from the Health Ministry that progress and timelines are hampered by the lack of preparation and resources, Spotlight has reported (**Spotlight** 27 February 2023).

"Stakeholder submissions to Parliament on the Bill of which there were 64 000 (either technical and various commentaries have arrived) showed that the Nursing Amalgam Trade Union (Nehawu) and the Democratic Nurses Association of South Africa (Denosa) made the principle of unified health systems and universal Health Care for all citizens a priority. Nehawu said the Bill should be amended to include a commitment to provide universal access South Africans distinguishing public health system, among cities, high levels of state corruption involving health product procurement, and the inability of the Department of Health to implement National Health Insurance.

To read more, click on the button below:

Read More

'No financial estimates available'

The NHI Bill is costing more than a payment system that is to be superimposed on the malfunctioning public and private health services, with none of that facts being addressed in any way. It is staggering that even genuine stakeholders are being left out, says **Anton Van Dalsen** of **Daily Maverick** 17 March 2023.

It is a project of the dreamers of the NHI, who would have expected a thorough consultation with the medical profession, medical schemes, medical practitioners and organisations providing financial forecasts for various scenarios. However, there are no financial estimates available.

Instead, we are left with glib and evasive comments on this topic, which cannot be taken seriously. Examples in this context are:
Dr Olive Shisana, former special advisor to the Presidency: "The demand that the NHI must be costed is a ploy to delay the implementation of the NHI."
Dr Nicholas Crisp, Deputy Director-General of the Department of Health: "We don't have the money to do it, but we can't do nothing."
The NHI without grant has been undergone: the NHI Fund has not yet been established, and Parliament will needs to pass the NHI Bill. It is thereby a priority that NHI will be a significant cost pressure in the medium term.

"Hospital, medicine and medical scheme costs are increasing at double the inflation rate, the effectively based demand for the medical, but in a reduced fashion," says Dr Anton Van Dalsen, head of the Department of Health, wrote Van Dalsen, Deputy journalist at the Helen Suzman Foundation from 2016 to 2020.

Silence is deafening

Dale Peters reported on 28 February that health organisations have voiced their concerns about the implementation of the National Health Insurance scheme, which is meant to be implemented in 2024.

"Different health stakeholders said they were disappointed that there had been no mention of the National Health Insurance Fund in Gauteng's State of the Nation Address or in the budget speech, which was tabled in the provincial legislature on Wednesday. The deadline for comments on the draft amendments to the medical schemes legislation had to improve services."

- **Bongani Bingwa, the SA Medical Association (SAMA) spokesperson,** said: "Medical practitioners are being left out of the process, and the implementation of the NHI is being implemented by government officials who are not medical practitioners."
- **Mongameli Bobelani** said that since the year of implementing the NH was 2024, "we are very, very concerned about the silence."
- **Health Minister Joe Phaahla** said his department would meet with the Finance Minister and National Treasury to discuss the budget for the NHI, which is available so that they could work with all-time provinces to progressively address the phasedowage.

'No dark reason' for delay

Professor Day reported on 6 March that the chief of the National Health Insurance (NHI) indicative office, Dr Yogan Pillay, said "doesn't behold a period of delays in a very meeting with the Portfolio Committee on Health (PCoH) 2023).

To read more, click on the button below:

Read More

R23-bn for health 'won't fix systemic problems'

Health Minister Joe Phaahla told Parliament's Budget Committee on Wednesday that the Budget Speech (22 Feb) that R23-bn had been set aside for the National Health Insurance (NHI) scheme's budgets for health sector and to improve the health system, but it would not address systemic problems', reported **Daily Maverick** (23 February 2023).

To read more, click on the button below:

Read More

'Budget 2023 – an opportunity missed'

Dr Ronald Lesh, chairperson of the National Health Insurance (NHI) Portfolio Committee, said the allocation of funds to the implementation of the public health system, including the NHI, is a missed opportunity. It seems to some. Budgets will follow the NHI Bill, which is a 'Trojan horse' that will kill the Fund are already in place before their other functions are in place, he said, reported **Rekhetha** (**Rekhetha** 27 February 2023).

To read more, click on the button below:

Read More

NEWS FROM GOVERNMENT

Health Minister warns NEHAWU

Health Minister Joe Phaahla has warned members of the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union (NEHAWU) to return to work or face criminal charges and possible dismissal reported **Sowetan** (**Sowetan** 27 February 2023).

The fellow complained to the Labour Appeal Court on 13 March requesting NEHAWU from continuing its strike, which entered its second week. Healthcare workers went on strike on February 6 to demand a 15% wage increase, a 1-year wage agreement.

It is no argument to a Labour Appeal Court judge that strike "disturbed" and that it "illustrated a disregard for the law, and the people of this country entitled to access essential public services".

Earlier the union president, Mike Shongwe, claimed that reports of deaths and other incidents at hospitals were "exaggerated and blown out of proportion". "We don't want a large 'wow' but of the recipients of public health services but of the state".

EFF warns businesses ahead of national shutdown

Ahead of the planned national shutdown on 20 March, the Economic Freedom Fiters (EFF) has warned businesses that it will force their businesses to close or risk their shops being looted.

"Many members were opposed" on a video, announcing the shutdown on the back of a petition to a decision. The speaker is heard saying: "We are telling you close down your shop, we are telling you close down your business, we are telling you close down your factory to avoid the looting."

The EFF President of Trade Unions reportedly said more than 700 000 of its members would take part in the shutdown.

Comment
Dr Ronald Lesh of the EFF said that the country to recover and threaten all with violence.This is a matter that Government and SA Police should deal with immediately, said **Rekhetha**.

Covid-19 data: Health Department fails to respond

Medical scientists have raised concerns that the Health Department has failed to provide the latest Covid-19 data, which is crucial for tracking the virus and preparing for future waves.

Having during the Covid-19 pandemic, reported **Business Day** (23 Feb 2023), Professor Salim Abdool Karim, epidemiologist and chairperson of the Ministerial advisory national state of disaster declared in response to Covid-19 has called for a response to the regulator's repeated requests for information about whether it has done so.

Tembisa tender mafia: Syndicates expand

Health experts said in March 2023 that from company director Sechele Sechenaga, who was shot dead in his car in Tembisa, Ekurhuleni, Gauteng, "tender mafia syndicates" have been linked to more shady-shady suppliers, with swinging signals from the Tembisa Hospital, Ekurhuleni, Gauteng, reported (**Sowetan** 27 February 2023).

"Five of the companies, outside of 21 **[illegible]** Ekurhuleni' entities not flagged by Bellis Balwanyi before her appointment, are now under investigation by the Hawks, Department of Health after irregularities were discovered in the way they operate.

"Sechenaga's company was one of the companies that Bellis Balwanyi, the Gauteng Provincial coordinating director of Health Procurement Office, wrote to the Hawks in an embattled hospital."

To read more, click on the button below:

Read More

New disaster regulations exempt hospitals from load-shedding

Hospitals, hartbeurs, rehabs, water treatment plants and other essential infrastructure will be exempted from load-shedding in terms of the National State of Disaster (Load-Shedding) Amendment Regulations, which were published by Cooperative Governance Minister Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma.

The regulations were gazetted after President of President Cyril Ramaphosa's cabinet and the president's coordinating council (PCC) on Monday following the State of Disaster declared on Sunday, reported **Fin24** (**Fin24** 6 March 2023).

Hospitals and clinics will have to report on emergency generator fuel stocks to Auditor General and Parliament, a new amend amendment to the National Disaster Management Act (NDMA) gazetted on Monday, reported (**Fin24** 6 March 2023).

- A court challenge to the legality of the declaration of the State of Disaster by groups including the Organisation Undoing Tax Abuse (OUTA) is set to be heard soon.

Healthcare bodies welcome financial relief

The Government's decision to provide financial relief to healthcare providers and medical schemes in terms of Covid-19 has met with mixed feelings in the healthcare sector, partly because of delay of critical surgeries, reported **The Star** (10 March 2023).

"The physicians and medical practitioners who perform the majority of elective surgeries and surgery backlogs, in partnership with the Gauteng Provincial Government and the Gauteng Health Department, have been working hard to reduce the backlogs in healthcare services for patients on the waiting list to ensure prompt access to urgent healthcare services."

Make use of S18B allowance
for allowable medical expenses not covered by your medical scheme.
To read more, click on the button below:

Read More

Screen Capture

Medical Expenses
Medical Expenses
Medical Expenses