



PRIVATE PRACTICE REVIEW

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 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

COVID-19: An alternative point of view



"Diving into the data and science, Ivor Cummins has been on mission to counter the mainstream fear-based hysteria with the more tempered reality. He has become a leading mind globally in best understanding the dynamics of COVID-19 and its health impact across the world."

"This is not about conspiracies. It's 100% about the science, data and evidence. If you want to be honestly brought up to speed on the realities of COVID-19, and how you should be thinking and feeling about the risks, this is an absolute MUST-LISTEN."

(Ivor Cummins completed a Chemical Engineering degree at UCD in 1990. He has since spent over 25 years in corporate technical leadership and management positions.)

To listen, click on the button below

Listen to Ivor Cummins



Report on healthcare workers presented; but then stalled

By 2025 SA will need an additional 97 000 healthcare workers – a third of them community healthcare workers (CHWs) – at an estimated cost of about R40-bn, reported **Spotlight** (2 September 2020). The study also highlights the inequities between provinces as well as between urban and rural areas. There are an estimated 7 specialists per 100 000 population employed in the public sector and 69 per 100 000 in the private health sector.

Based on a novel linking of several datasets, the **2030 Human Resources for Health Strategy** estimates that there are currently 9 731 specialists (FTEs) in SA. This is considerably less than previous analyses by the **SA Health Review: 15 008** (2015); the Health Professions Council of SA: **12 776** (2018); and Econex: **10 585** (2012).

The report, chaired by Prof Laetitia Rispel of Wits, was developed by a ministerial task team to support the National Department of Health with the development of an HRH Strategy for 2030 and an associated Strategic Plan for the five-year period from 2020/21 until 2024/25.

- **The goals include:**
 - Effective health workforce planning;
 - a research-informed health workforce policy (including a competent and caring multi-disciplinary health workforce);
 - optimal governance; and building a productive and empowered health workforce.

"It is believed that the strategy has been presented to and endorsed by the National Health Council's (NHC) Technical Committee, but that it has since been stalled," reported **Spotlight**.

What PPE graft means for National Health Insurance

Spotlight (10 September 2020)

"The latest scandal regarding large-scale corruption in personal protective equipment (PPE) procurement makes it difficult for a population, worn down by corruption, to believe in the transformation of the health system into a system of contracting and procurement under National Health Insurance (NHI).

"In practice, the astonishing extent of the misuse of funds and exploitation of lax contracting processes during a global pandemic, has confirmed fears about our ability to secure the integrity of a health system based so directly on contracting and procurement." reported **Spotlight** (10 September 2020).

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NEWS ON GOVERNMENT



Parliament battles to process submissions on NHI Bill

"Members of Parliament are at odds over how to process the 32 217 hand-delivered and 32 634 e-mailed submissions received in response to the National Health Insurance (NHI) Bill, nine months after the input deadline," reported **Business Day** (3 September).

The bill was tabled in August 2019, and the deadline for written submissions to Parliament was November 29.

Staff are overwhelmed by the job of scanning, validating and capturing hand-delivered submissions in Parliament's Uvimba electronic database, said spokesman Dennis Bandi. Meanwhile, MPs are debating the extent to which an external service provider should get involved and expressed their concern about the risk of legal challenge if Parliament did not manage the public participation process carefully.

The bill provides for a central NHI fund to buy services from accredited public- and private-sector providers, and entails sweeping changes to 11 other pieces of legislation, including the National Health Act, the Competition Act and the Medical Schemes Act. It creates uncertainty about the future of medical schemes, which provide private healthcare access to 8.9-m people and heralds a shake up for the role of provincial health departments now providing most public health services.



Auditor General's first report on COVID-19 procurement corruption

Dead people, prison inmates, public servants and children below the legal age to work, were among those who, received COVID-19 benefits, according to the first report-back to have been issued by Auditor General Mkhomo. He also says that 30,000 beneficiaries have been flagged for further investigation.

The report also found that national and provincial Departments of Health, and Education paid up to five times more than they should have for personal protective equipment (PPE).

Meanwhile the Unemployment Insurance Fund Commissioner, Teboho Maruping, and his entire senior management have been suspended. Auditors have also identified clear cases of fraud, but more information will be provided in subsequent reports, Makwetu said.

Nearly R148-bn was budgeted for COVID-19 relief, of which the government had spent almost R69-bn by the end of July.

Measures to probe 40 000 excess deaths

Scientists researching the number of excess deaths during the C-19 epidemic urged the government to fast-track the processing of death notifications to find the true coronavirus death toll. By August 29, the Department of Health (DoH) reported that 19 981 people had died after contracting C-19. However, the latest weekly deaths report by the Burden of Disease Research Unit revealed an estimated 39 087 excess natural deaths had occurred by 18 August. At that date, the department had reported 12 264 deaths – resulting in 26 823 natural deaths that are not directly attributed to C-19, but deaths that occurred while surges of coronavirus cases were occurring. This implies that SA's true C-19 death toll may have surpassed 30 000, more than double the official total.

SPECIAL NEWS

Revenue loss for private practices running into billions due to COVID-19



Private healthcare practices in the country have lost an estimated total of R9.1-bn in revenue since the beginning of the COVID-19 lockdown. A loss of another R2.8-bn is predicted for the rest of the year as patients' volumes are expected to remain lower than normal and the November/December holiday period approaches.

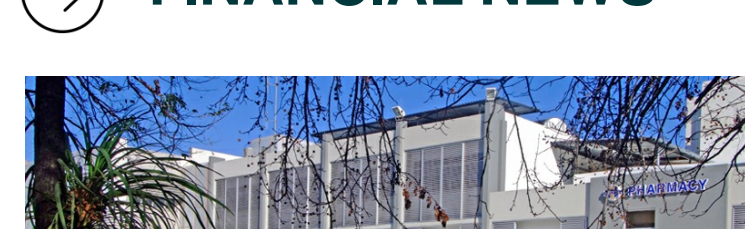
This is according to Healthbridge MD, Luis da Silva. Speaking at a webinar organised by the Gauteng General Practitioners Collaboration (GGPC), Da Silva looked at the impact of the pandemic on the business of practices and measured doctors can implement to safeguard them against financial ruin.

Sharing weekly data collected by Healthbridge of 5 000 practices representing around 8 000 doctors across the country, Da Silva noted that, although there has been a gradual increase in patient volumes since the introduction of Lockdown Level 4, it is starting to ease off again. Aggregated across all disciplines, patient numbers were at their lowest levels in April, plummeting in some specialities to as low as 32%, but gradually picking up after the implementation of Level 3 to an average of around 84%.

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FINANCIAL NEWS



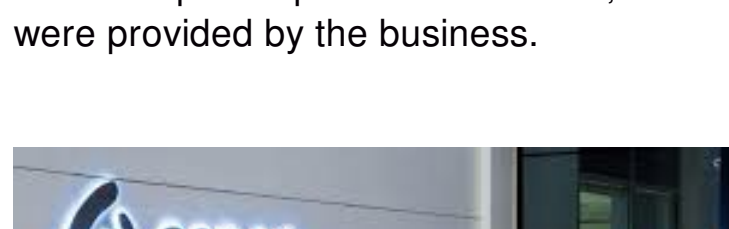
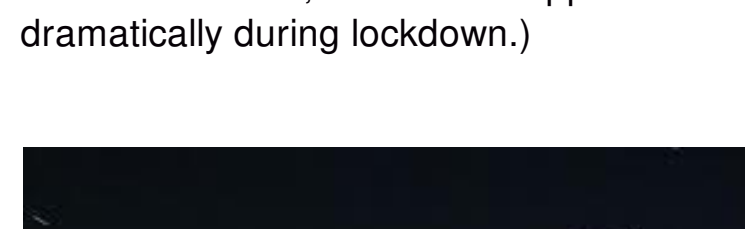
Mediclinic and Netcare hammered by costs for C-19

"Private healthcare groups Netcare and Mediclinic have seen an increase in patients returning to their facilities, a good sign after the businesses were hammered by the cost of preparing for COVID-19," reported **Business Times** (30 August 2020).

According to Netcare's hospital division, R1-bn was spent on C-19 preparations. This enabled the group to treat 10 632 patients. Meanwhile, the number of patients to be admitted for elective or planned medical procedures has plummeted, due to C-19 lockdown. (Planned medical surgery or treatments are about 60% of Mediclinic Southern Africa's business, but it has dropped dramatically during lockdown.)

Despite the large reduction in patients, both groups had to spend a lot of money in order to ensure their hospitals were safe.

Both groups said staff costs consumed the largest chunk of their budgets. An estimated 2 000 of Netcare's 18 000 healthcare workers - that were either at high risk of infection or infected with the virus - required quarantine facilities, which were provided by the business.



C-19 provision eats into Discovery profits

Aspen withholds dividend payment

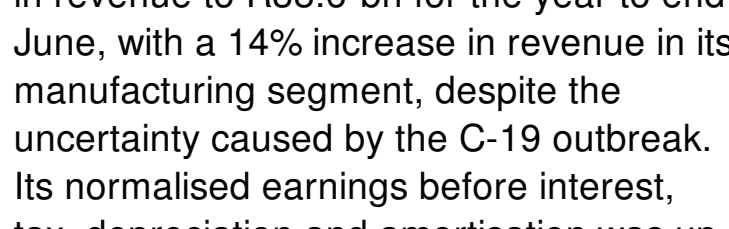
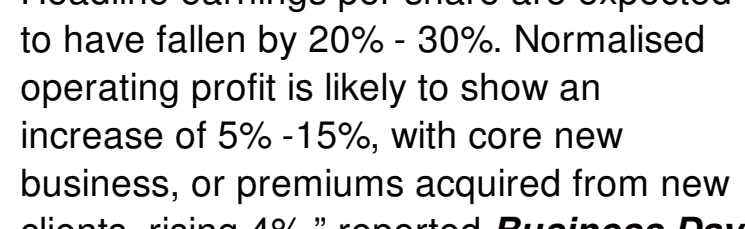
Discovery issued a profit warning that headline earnings per share were likely to drop by 90%-100% in the year to the end of June. The drop is mainly due to the R3.3-bn provision for COVID-19-related effects.

Aspen-Pharmacia will not be paying a dividend in the year to end June. This follows the uncertainty caused by the C-19 outbreak, reported **Business Day** (10 September 2020).

Headline earnings per share are expected to have fallen by 20% - 30%. Normalised operating profit is likely to show an increase of 5% -15%, with core new business, or premiums acquired from new clients, rising 4%," reported **Business Day** (31 August 2020).

The latest results reflected a 9% increase in revenue to R38.6-bn for the year to end June, with a 14% increase in revenue in its manufacturing segment, despite the uncertainty caused by the C-19 outbreak. Its normalised earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation was up by 7% to R11-bn.

PHARMACEUTICAL NEWS



Using remdesivir to treat C-19 still controversial

Drugs for obesity, diabetes, show promise for C-19 use

The Competition Commission is investigating prices charged by suppliers of the COVID-19 medicine *remdesivir*. Researchers found that between \$10 and \$600 (R170 to about R10 000) for a 10-day course would be a fair price to charge for the medicine.

Novo Nordisk, the Danish drug maker, is exploring whether a new class of medicines that helps people lose weight and control diabetes also has potential in fighting COVID-19, reported **Bloomberg** (7 September 2020). Initial analysis of electronic medical records shows that GLP-1 drugs, which help patients keep blood sugar levels in check, could be used in battling the illness.

Remdesivir is not registered for use in SA but Cipla has obtained a license from the SA Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA) to import it. By the end of August Cipla SA, had already sold 25 000 units of the drug to the private sector.

A grant of R128-m from the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) will help fund research at Stellenbosch University on new tuberculosis (TB) tests. The trials will comprise 4 000 participants and seven novel tests, that will be evaluated for diagnosing active TB; for TB treatment response outcomes; and for predicting those at risk of progressing to active TB.

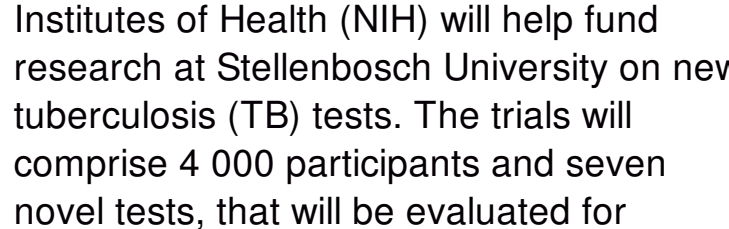
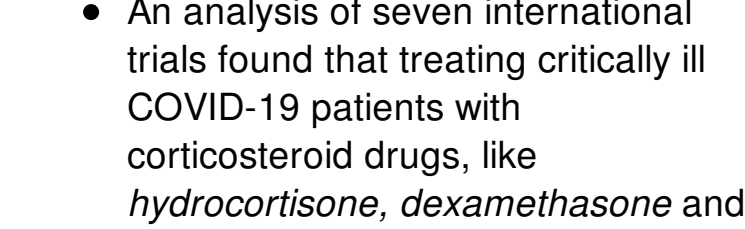
- An analysis of seven international trials found that treating critically ill COVID-19 patients with corticosteroid drugs, like hydrocortisone, dexamethasone and methylprednisolone, reduces the risk of death by 20%, reported **Reuters** (2 September 2020).

COVID-19-trials continue, despite setback

While the entire world waits in anticipation on the announcement of a COVID-19-vaccine, the University of Oxford – in cooperation with AstraZeneca Plc – continues with its experimental trials in the UK. AstraZeneca CEO, Pascal Soriot, said the coronavirus vaccine could still be ready before the end of the year, after pausing its trials due to a possible serious neurological problem in one participant.

Meanwhile trials of the Oxford vaccine in the US, Brazil, South Africa and India were halted, following the safety review.

GENERAL NEWS



C-19 Lockdown might have saved 16 000

People urged to download new COVID-19 app

According to an analysis by Discovery Health, the COVID-19 lockdown will have averted 16 000 deaths by the end of the year. The Discovery model projects 51 000 deaths from C-19 by the end of the year. This could have been 25% higher without the stringent measures implemented by government. Analysis of claims data from members of Discovery Health's client schemes, which include Discovery Health Medical Scheme, showed the mortality rate among C-19 patients admitted to an ICU had improved by 25% since the start of the pandemic, dropping from 80% to 60%.

The DoH has urged people to download a new smartphone app, called COVID-Alert SA, in a bid to improve COVID-19 contact tracing and preventing a resurgence of the virus. The app makes it possible to notify non-known contacts that you have been exposed through them to COVID-19 or that they have been exposed to you. According to experts the user's privacy will be protected.

Long wait for new nurses
Private Hospital Group Life Healthcare says it is unlikely to have new nurses for the next two years, due to delays in receiving accreditation to train the nurses at its education institutions. Last year trade union Solidarity placed the shortage at more than 44 700 since 2010. According to Dr Sharon Vasuthevan, Health Lifecare would not be able to train any specialised nurses as it is still waiting for accreditation for its nursing colleges from the SA Nursing Council.

Covid-Alert SA is available on Google Play and Store and developers are working on making it available on other platforms.

Mediclinic SA and Netcare are facing the same problem.

The study used anonymised blood samples collected from 3 700 pregnant women and people with HIV between July 17 and August 17, 2020.

SPECIAL NOTES

Fully equipped medical practice in Rayton for sale:

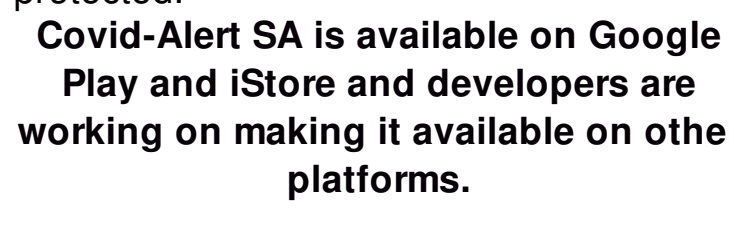
Dr A D Lombard
081 779 2933 / 081 797 0707

Private medical practice (running for 30 years) for sale.
Price: R1 500 000.00 all included, without office space.
Turnover: R2 000 000.00 per annum minimum.
Consulting rooms in Raymed Centre, next to Rayton Pharmacy.
 Rayton is a small town, 30km east of Pretoria - services Cullinan Rayton, Refilwe, Onverwacht, Kleintfontein as well as large rural areas.
 Electronic claims as well as prescriptions and clinical records in place
 Office space to rent: approximately 125sqm.

For more information on the Practice in Rayton, click on the button below

Practice in Rayton

Quality approved KN95 masks for sale



PRICE PER MASK: R18.72 incl VAT
UNIT PRICE (pack of 10): R187.20 incl VAT

AVAILABILITY FROM PARTICIPATING WHOLESALEERS: Kendon

ESTIMATED DATE OF AVAILABILITY: From 6 August
ORDER STOCK CODE: 210529
CONTACT NUMBER: 011 608 1170
CONTACT EMAIL: Sales@kendon.co.za

Trenite KN95 mask - SAHPRA licensed supplier - FDA/CE validated certification - Chinese National Accreditation Service for Conformity Assessment Test report - SABS inspection report - SANS 50149 approved test report (Prototechnik)

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