

Elsabe Klinck & Associates on NHI

NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE BILL: STILL A WAY TO GO...

BUT ACTION REQUIRED BY STAKEHOLDERS

- The media has been reporting on the adoption of the NHI Bill in the National Assembly. The Bill is now to be progressed to the National Council of Provinces. We recommend that stakeholders approach the **Select Committee on Health and Social Services** to make submissions on the Bill. The reason is that nearly none of the submissions made so far, have been discussed after the submissions were made, and nearly none were included in the Bill. Stakeholders should bear in mind the provincial interests in health, and the fact that, at present, provinces employ health staff and receive budgets for health services – both of which are to be significantly changed under the NHI.
- EKA has a **marked-up version of the Bill** as it currently reads, indicating what has been changed and how that is different to the version introduced into Parliament in 2019.
- One of the significant changes relate to the power that the NHIF to **require the supply of data by any provider or supplier**. This is significant, and reminds one of the more recent data requests in relation to medicines pricing and, during the RPL, the data that were required of healthcare providers and hospitals.
- Various issues have also become clear through interviews with the National Department of Health, such as that **the HMI recommendations will be implemented "via the NHI"** and that the "standardised" medical scheme package would be the NHI package. This way of "implementing" the HMI recommendations are extremely problematic.
- Two issues of a more legal nature relate to the provincial powers in the Constitution, and the designation of public hospitals as "national components" of government under the Public Service Act.
- The main issues not being discussed by Parliamentary Committees include contingent liabilities for malpractice against public sector facilities, as well as the necessary staff transfers from the provinces to either the national Department of Health, the "national components" or the NHI Fund.
- No law that would transfer health-moneys from the Compensation Fund and RAF have been introduced into Parliament yet, neither has a so-called "Money Bill" to levy the specific taxes on employed persons, and which will, reportedly necessitate persons to abandon their medical schemes.

Contact us to schedule an in-dept NHI briefing session with your business, practice or health facility.