



KwaZulu-Natal Doctors Healthcare Coalition

61 Juniper Rd
Overport
4067

Reg. 96/15232/06
PO Box 70855
Overport
4067

031 207 3729
office@kzncmcc.co.za
kzncmcc.co.za

NHI BILL

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****Press Statement****

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

KZN Doctors Healthcare Coalition (KZNDHC) Voices Concerns over NHI Bill and Highlights Failures in the Current Public Health System

[Durban, 30 May 2023] - The KZN Doctors Healthcare Coalition (KZNDHC) hereby expresses its reservations regarding the current version of the National Health Insurance (NHI) Bill, emphasizing concerns pertaining to the provision of healthcare services to patients in our country. Additionally, we would like to shed light on the failures of the current public health system and the issues of abuse and mismanagement of funds.

After careful consideration, the parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Health has reviewed and accepted the NHI Bill. While we acknowledge this milestone, it is important to recognize the existing challenges and failures in our public health system, which require urgent attention and resolution.

One of the key issues we raise is the development of the NHI Bill without due consideration for the legitimate concerns and recommendations of experts, particularly regarding the introduction of Contracting Units for Primary Healthcare (CUPs). We believe that the implementation of CUPs may have significant implications for the delivery of primary healthcare services, including the quality, accessibility, and continuity of care. It is vital that the voices of professionals and stakeholders in the healthcare industry are heard and incorporated into the development of the bill, particularly when it comes to the establishment and functioning of CUPs.

Directors : Prof. MN Chetty (Chairman), Dr P. Ramlachan (Deputy Chairperson),
Dr N. Govender (CEO), Dr DGH Bobat (Financial Director), Dr JD Patel (Company Secretary)
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The KZNDHC firmly believes that any reform, including the implementation of the NHI, must address the fundamental issues that plague our public health system. These issues include a lack of sufficient resources, infrastructure deficiencies, and workforce shortages. The failure to adequately address these challenges has resulted in compromised healthcare services and hindered access to quality care for many South Africans.

Furthermore, we cannot ignore the issues of abuse and mismanagement of funds that have plagued our public health system. Instances of financial misconduct and misappropriation of funds within various state-owned entities have eroded trust in the government's ability to efficiently manage healthcare budgets. The KZNDHC, alongside the public and healthcare stakeholders, is deeply concerned about entrusting the lives and well-being of our citizens to a government with a history of financial mismanagement.

The NHI Bill, in its current form, does not provide sufficient reassurances or mechanisms to address these concerns adequately. As representatives of the healthcare community, we believe it is essential to prioritize strengthening our public health system, ensuring transparency, accountability, and responsible management of resources, before implementing significant reforms such as the NHI.

On Friday, the parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Health approved the NHI Bill, which will now proceed to be debated in the National Assembly. As this process unfolds, we urge all stakeholders to critically assess the proposed reforms, engaging in open dialogue and collaboration to develop a healthcare system that is truly comprehensive, equitable, and sustainable for all South Africans.

The KZNDHC will continue to closely monitor the developments around the NHI Bill, advocating for the urgent rectification of the existing failures in the public health system. We remain committed to working together with policymakers, experts, and stakeholders to ensure the provision of high-quality healthcare services that our citizens deserve.

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For media inquiries or further information, please contact:

Dr Neven Govender

CEO KZNDHC

office@kzndhc.co.za

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KZNDHC is an independent practitioner association representing 1200 doctors in the private sector of KZN.

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