



South African Association of Hospital & Institutional Pharmacists (SAAHIP)

**INPUT ON NHI BILL TO THE PARLIAMENTARY PORTFOLIO
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**

Wednesday, 26th May 2021

**The National Health
Insurance (NHI) Bill**





A sector of the Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa (PSSA)



Academy



SAACP

SAACP



SAAHIP



SAAPI
South African Association of Pharmacists in Industry

SAAPI



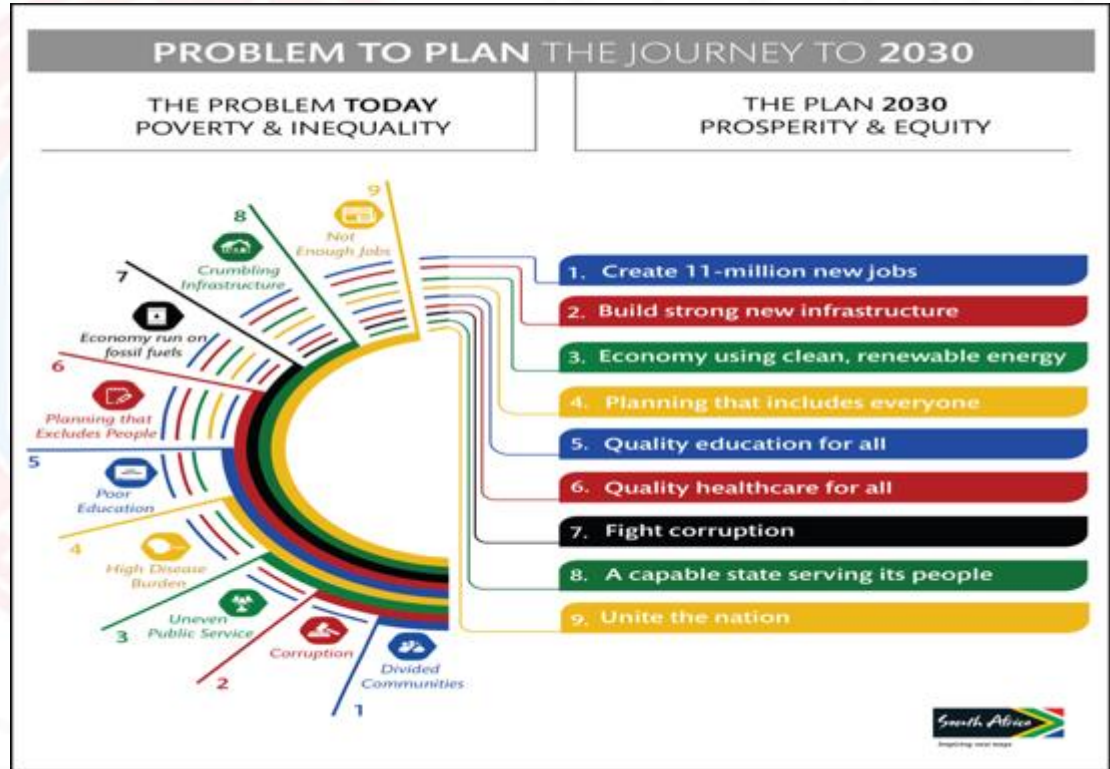
OBJECTIVES OF SAAHIP

- To promote the **professional, educational and economic interests** of the members of the Association and of the pharmaceutical profession, with specific emphasis on pharmacists active in the practice of hospital and institutional pharmacy;
- To uphold and improve the **professional integrity and standards of professional conduct** of the members of the Association;
- To improve, promote and maintain the **image of the profession**;
- To represent generally the **views and interests** of the members on all pharmaceutical matters, including representing the members in dealings with **government and similar agencies**;
- To uphold and assist in the **promotion and maintenance of the health of the people of South Africa** through the provision of a **satisfactory and dependable pharmaceutical service**;
- To provide and promote benefits to its members, such as advancing members' **specific interests**; and
- In recognising the diversity of the population of the Republic of South Africa, to promote the **representation of all sectors of the South African community** in its membership.

WHY NHI?



- **NHI represents a substantial policy shift that will necessitate a massive reorganisation of the current health system, both public and private and also derives its mandate from the National Development Plan (NDP) of the country.**





Role of the PHARMACIST & NHI



Role of the Pharmacist



- Pharmacists are medical professionals that are well trained, regulated, inspected and equipped to play a role in the continuum of health promotion, disease prevention, diagnosis and treatment of minor ailments through pharmaceutical care delivery.

Provision of comprehensive services:

- PCDT pharmacists (Primary Care Drug Therapy)
- Clinical Governance
- Implementation of protocols and guidelines
- Prioritization of pharmaceutical care by targeting high-risk patients
- Medicine supply management
- Public health promotion
- Rational medicine use
- Medicine safety reviews
- Antimicrobial stewardship
- Recommendation:
 - Explore the role of PIT (Pharmacist-Initiated Therapy) as part of NHI





Role of HoPS (Head of Pharmacy Services) and District Pharmacists:

- Great relevance in NHI as overseers, gatekeepers and policymakers
- Influence and ensure the implementation and monitoring of pharmaceutical and related systems and practices
- Active participation, consultation and advising management health teams
- Leadership



- To date, there has been limited dialogues with pharmacists on NHI.
- We recommend that NHI discussions with pharmacists be strengthened as they are an asset with varying skills and competencies.
- Pharmacists and their support personnel need to be included and acknowledged in the NHI Bill.
- As per the new OSD dispensation, pharmacists should not be recognized as “Allied Workers” but as “Medical Workers” due to their specific skill set.



Further comments on the NHI BILL



Accreditation for the purposes of contracting with the NHI Fund

- We recommend that a process of upgrading or improving non-compliant facilities be provided for or be put in place so not to further affect peoples' rights to access to healthcare services.

Semi- autonomous central, provincial tertiary and regional hospitals



- Clear referral pathways are required. Currently the referral pathways differ per province.
- Define Province's role of overseeing, gatekeeping, influencing policies and ensuring that implementation and monitoring of adherence to prescripts.

Access to health care services-population coverage



- What specific health care services are being purchased for the elderly / geriatric population in terms of chronic non-communicable disease care and palliative care?
- The elderly should be regarded as a separate target group just as children, refugees and inmates are mentioned specifically.
- Will there be assistance programs for the elderly and disabled to register on to NHI?

Health care services coverage



- Explain non-compliance of referral pathways in a critical situation e.g. cerebrovascular accident or myocardial infarction – refusal of care or criteria to be set for emergency cases?

Powers of fund



- Has an allocation been made specifically for services and medication that may be deemed essential or necessary at a later time i.e. during the implementation phase after the formularies have been designed?

General comments:



- The policy deals with a reactive rather than a proactive approach to South African Healthcare. More emphasis should be placed on prevention rather than cure. Look at investing in education programs and initiatives as part of NHI function. Demonstrate this clearly in plan.
- All amendments and decisions taken by the NHI board must be officially announced to public, irrespective of how minor the decision may be. Access to financial statements and monitoring of cashflow should be publicly accessible at all times. This must be a transparent system. The monitoring and evaluation system should involve the public even if they will play observer roles.



"The **best** way to
find yourself is to
lose yourself in the
service of others."
-Mahatma Gandhi

Thank you

for the opportunity to transform South African healthcare for the better....