

## **Motsoaledi should account for plans to kill private healthcare – Patricia Kopane - Politics Web – 19 November**

The DA is deeply concerned by reports that the Minister of Health, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, is making major changes to National Health Insurance Bill, only four months after it was first made available for public comment.

Even more concerning are reports that Motsoaledi has made substantive changes to the bill and presented a new version to Cabinet without consulting with National Treasury or senior members of his own department. Instead, reports suggest that the changes are the brainchild of Motsoaledi and Presidential Advisor Dr Olive Shisana.

Some of the most dramatic and concerning amendments to the draft bill on NHI reportedly include restricting medical aid or other private health insurance schemes to providing only complementary cover, effectively making NHI the only game in town.

The effect of this is nothing short of nationalising the private healthcare industry by making the State the sole purchaser of healthcare services.

The DA raised the alarm when we were first presented with the bill in July, pointing out that the proposed National Health Insurance Fund would be little more than an enormous healthcare state-owned entity (SOE) that would force private healthcare providers to do business with it at predetermined rates. This NHI model would effectively capture the existing 8.8 million current medical scheme users and force them to bail out the public healthcare system which has all but collapsed under Motsoaledi's long tenure.

The proposal was also not properly costed with Motsoaledi admitting that he had no idea how much it would cost or where the money would come from. Meanwhile, NHI pilot projects have failed abysmally wherever they have been trialled.

The DA will today write to the chairpersons of the Portfolio Committee on Health and the Standing Committee on Finance to call a joint meeting to discuss NHI. The move to universal healthcare in South Africa is too significant for the Department of Health and National Treasury to not work together in designing a sustainable model.

Universal healthcare is achievable in South Africa, but the National Health Insurance and the Medical Schemes Amendment bills will not achieve it.

The DA remains committed to providing all South Africans with dignified health services and we will continue to fight for every citizen's right to access quality public healthcare.

The DA also remains committed to protecting the freedom of all South Africans in their right to choose how they invest financially in their personal health and well-being.

*Issued by Patricia Kopane, DA Free State Premier Candidate, 19 November 2018*