

# Health care system needs a checkup

**T**HE ALLEGATIONS by the Rajbansi family against the private health care system in South Africa are shocking. But at this stage their allegations are just that. And they have to be taken in the context that the Rajbansi family are grieving the loss of a loved one. The family need to formally lodge their complaints which must then be tested. And until that happens, those who treated the Minority Front leader

must be given the benefit of the doubt.

That having been said the allegations made by the Rajbansi family are of a serious nature.

And they are becoming far too common.

More and more people are complaining about how inhumane and profit-driven the private health sector has become.

It includes South Africa's Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi.

A few months ago Motsoaledi ac-

cused private healthcare of being a "brutal system" because it made a business of what should be an essential service.

He pointed out that private hospitals and specialists received the biggest chunk of the country's R84 billion budget.

According to him two out of every three rands spent by government went to the private sector.

The Health Minister pointed out how expensive the private sector was. According to him a circumcision

(which is important in the fight against HIV/Aids) cost as much as R15 000 in a private health care facility but only R400 at a public hospital.

Motsoaledi went so far as to say that if a person wanted to become a billionaire they should not own a mine but a private hospital.

Motsoaledi made these comments while campaigning for the National Health Insurance (NHI) which government plans to introduce next year.

The aim of NHI is to make health care affordable to all.

In addition to the high costs in the private sector, government is also planning to establish an ombudsman type office where people who have complaints can go to.

Right now many people have nowhere to turn and feel helpless, be it for waiting too long or having to deal with healthcare professionals who have the wrong attitude.

Some would argue that the private health care sector is in need of treatment which is long overdue.

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