

### ***Public, private healthcare sectors sign 'historic' pact***

HEALTH Minister Aaron Motsoaledi has signed a "social compact" with the private sector, describing it as a historic step towards closer collaboration between the government and private enterprise. He said such collaboration was vital for the success of the government's ambitions for introducing National Health Insurance (NHI). Motsoaledi said rebuilding confidence in the public health sector for the full successful implementation of the NHI system was of utmost importance for our country. The Minister and the CEOs of 23 companies have agreed to meet at least twice a year to discuss issues that affect them, and have established the Public Health Enhancement Fund to address the skills shortages facing the healthcare sector. The fund pools donations from 23 companies from the pharmaceutical, private hospital and medical scheme administration industries, who have committed to providing financial support for the next three years. The money will be used to train more doctors, improve the skills of healthcare managers, and ensure more doctors get specialised training in HIV/AIDS. Forty-million rand has been committed for the first year. Clicks CEO David Kneale said the public and private healthcare sectors had many areas where they disagreed, but recognised they needed to work together to address skills shortages. The fund would start out providing support for doctors, but was expected to expand to other healthcare professionals in due course. The companies are: Abbott Laboratories, Alcon Labs, Aspen Pharmacare Holdings, Bausch & Lomb, Clicks Holdings, Clinix Health Group, Discovery Holdings, Dischem, Galderma, Roche, Joint Medical Holdings, Life Healthcare, Litha Healthcare, Medi-Clinic, Mediscor, Medscheme, Netcare, Novo Nordisk, United Pharmaceutical Distributors and Servier Laboratories. The announcement of the pact follows Tuesday's launch of the Academy for Leadership and Management in Health Care, which is expected to improve the skills of hospital managers (see article below).

*Tamar Kahn: Business Day, 9 November 2012*