

Treasury announces 'substantial' progress on NHI Bill process

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Cape Town - The South African National Treasury on Friday announced it made “substantial” progress on the national health insurance (NHI) Bill consultation in key areas and have reached agreement on most of the major issues.

“We have made substantial progress on key areas and have reached agreement on most of the major issues. Many of the issues raised by treasury have been substantively addressed,” the statement from the National Treasury said.

“We are confident that we will soon publish this important Bill for tabling in Parliament. More details will be published once this process is completed and the Bill is approved by the Cabinet.”

The development of the NHI Bill has involved wide consultation with broad sections of society since its publication for public comment. This process of consultation, which included the Presidential NHI consultative meeting on August 24, has enabled the government to ensure that all considered views were available for the review of the draft Bill.

“President Cyril Ramaphosa, who is providing leadership and stewardship of the NHI process, has reiterated the commitment of the South African government to overcome the current two-tier health system, its inequities and inefficiencies through the progressive implementation of the NHI,” the statement said.

“The work of government on NHI is guided by the core principles which were first laid out in the NHI White Paper in 2015. These core principles refer to universal health coverage on the basis of need rather than ability to pay, greater social solidarity through cross-subsidisation, and the creation of a single common pool of funding through the NHI Fund,” the office said, adding that to ensure a successful execution of the NHI programme, a NHI war room has been established in the Presidency, and involves all relevant government departments.

Officials from the Presidency, the Department of Health, National Treasury and other government departments have been working together on the revised draft NHI Bill.

NHI is a health financing system that pools funds to provide access to quality health services for all South Africans based on their health needs and irrespective of their socioeconomic status.