

Accountability lacking in public health sector – AfriForum – 26 November 2018

Outrageous number of medical claims show merits and accountability lack in public health sector – AfriForum

The civil rights organisation AfriForum today expressed concern regarding the huge number of medical legal claims against provincial health departments. *Rapport* yesterday reported that Kimi Makwetu, the Auditor-General, concluded that these claims are much more in seven of the country's provinces than the various departments' industry budget for 2018/2019 and subsequently contain large risks for service delivery.

Dr Eugene Brink, AfriForum's Spokesperson for health-related matters, says these facts are extremely concerning. "These claims weren't taken into consideration when the budget was compiled and successful claims will thus have to be paid from money that was intended for services. However, it is not only simply the number of negligence claims that is a matter of concern, but also huge amounts of irregular expenditure. AfriForum recently particularly submitted criminal charges in all the provinces regarding this type of expenditure that amounted to more than R10 billion.

"This indicates that the public health system is suffering from a total lack of accountability. The government is still refusing to make appointments based on merit or to clamp down on the real offenders, as well as to train more medical personnel and approach the assistance of the private sector to help reduce the pressure," says Brink.

According to him, this is just another sheer sign that national health insurance (NHI) is doomed to failure. "The government wants to roll out its entire NHI plan via the provincial health departments. These state of affairs show that it is simply not possible because the NHI system will simply be a much more expensive and equally dysfunctional one than the current public health sector."

Issued by Marelie Greeff, Media Relations Officer, AfriForum, 26 November 2018