

President promises revised NHI plan – BizCommunity 21 June 2019

President Cyril Ramaphosa, in his second State of the Nation Address this year, said that revising the National Health Insurance (NHI) detailed plan of implementation is at an advanced stage.

The plan includes accelerating quality of care initiatives in public facilities, building human resource capacity, establishment of the NHI Fund structure, and costing the administration of the NHI Fund.

The government will attend to the health of the nation to improve the quality of life of South Africans, reduce poverty in all its dimensions, and strengthen the country's economy, he said. "We must attend to the capacity of our hospitals and clinics. An 80-year-old grandmother cannot spend an entire day in a queue waiting for her medication. An ill patient cannot be turned away because there is a shortage of doctors and nurses... A woman in labour cannot have her unborn child's life put in danger because the ambulance has taken too long to come."

As part of the work that must be urgently done to improve the quality of the health system, Ramaphosa said the Presidential Health Summit Compact, which draws on expert insights, and will mobilise the capabilities of all key stakeholders to address the crisis in the state's clinics and hospitals, is being finalised.

He also raised concerns about increase in HIV infection rates, particularly among young women, and the relatively low numbers of men testing for HIV and starting treatment.

He said government will intensify its work to implement the 90-90-90 strategy to end HIV as a public health threat, which includes increasing the number of people on treatment by at least another two million by December 2020.

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