

DoH finalising a draft set of NHI ‘financing scenarios’

31 August 2016

A draft set of National Health Insurance (NHI) ‘financing scenarios’ is expected to be ready for provincial health MECs in October, according to Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi.

Responding to a question from DA MP Wilmot James, the Minister said that – in finalising government policy on universal health care (UHC) – his department will “consider” each scenario and “carefully reflect” on the ‘very useful suggestions’ received from stakeholders following the release of a draft White Paper late last year for comment, notes Pam Saxby for *Legalbrief Policy Watch*.

Noting that the costs associated with implementing UHC are ‘influenced by many factors, including design elements and the pace of implementation’, Motsoaledi emphasised the importance of focusing on the implications of each funding scenario for incrementally introducing the necessary reforms. With that in mind, the draft scenarios will be informed by an “estimation framework” based on “configurations” of projected service demand, service delivery and associated costs ‘at each level of care’.

Meanwhile, government has invested R4.5bn in renovating healthcare facilities across 11 NHI pilot projects (SABC News). Aimed at strengthening district-level health systems, funding and service delivery, the pilot phase is now in its final year. In the face of criticism from both private and public sector stakeholders about the “slow pace” of introducing a programme perceived in some circles as over-ambitious and unworkable, the Department of Health remains committed to a cautious approach going forward.

By Legalbrief Policy Watch