



NHI doomed to fail, says Public Servants Association

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NHI doomed to fail, says Public Servants Association The PSA says the NHI has to provide meaningful and quality healthcare. Picture: Pixabay Published 1h ago Written by Kamogelo Moichela Multimedia Journalist, IOL Politics By Kamogelo Moichela | Published 1h ago Share Johannesburg - The Public Servants Association (PSA), has expressed concerns about the recent media reports regarding the National Health Insurance (NHI) Bill that left citizens, including public servants, with more questions than answers. This comes after the National Assembly passed the NHI Bill. This will now allow citizens to have access to healthcare despite their financial situation. The bill seeks to exercise the public's right to receive healthcare services. This means that all citizens will have full access to healthcare coverage at accredited and certified health institutions, private health practitioners, hospitals, and clinics. The services will be available for all races, employed or unemployed, and legal long-term residents, free of charge. It also raised concerns about the future of medical-aid schemes and how they will be incorporated into the NHI. The PSA showed its support for the idea to ensure universal access to healthcare, but said that a single healthcare system, such as the NHI, was not the solution for access to meaningful healthcare services. It emphasised that the idea should be meaningful access to quality service, adequate medical supplies, clean and fully equipped facilities, and adequate staffing with experience and expertise. "Without these fundamental aspects in place, the NHI is doomed to be a failure," it said. Despite pledging support for the rehabilitation of the public health sector, the PSA believed that public sector employees, like other citizens, must have the right to choose whether to use public or private

healthcare. It added that the choice should not be punished by imposing a tax burden on employees. PSA said the country has witnessed a decline in the quality of public services over the years owing to various reasons, including human capital flight, poor infrastructure maintenance, a lack of accountability, and corruption. However, the association questioned if the NHI would yield better benefits for public servants and how it would impact their disposable income, as many of them are already subscribers to a variety of medical aid schemes. It said the notion that workers could be expected to pay for private medical insurance and the NHI simultaneously induced anxiety among public sector employees. The PSA said the health reform could be achieved by a competent, non-partisan public health service, free of corruption and political interference. "The demise of the private sector system through the introduction of a single purchaser model of the NHI and the imposition of a tax, equivalent to the average medical aid spend, will also not produce effective management and administration in the public healthcare sector," it maintained. It called for a responsible, affordable, and sustained healthcare system. It also called for a human resource strategy to resolve skill shortages in the health sector. "There must be a clear human resources plan to ensure training and staffing of facilities. There can be no reform of the public sector if shortages of skilled personnel persist. In addition, the graduate output must be improved on an urgent basis to meet health sector demands," it said. Furthermore, the PSA urged President Cyril Ramaphosa to carefully consider all inputs before forcing a system onto the citizenry. This will have dire consequences for the country. IOL Related Topics:...