

MEDIA RELEASE **PSA concerned about proposed changes to Road Accident Fund**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA), representing more than 245 000 public-sector employees and retired public servants, is concerned about proposed changes to the Road Accident Fund (RAF) and potential repercussions for persons belonging to a medical aid.

The RAF plays a vital role in providing financial support to victims of road accidents. Recent discussions about altering the system have raised concerns amongst citizens. The Fund fuel levy provides personal insurance (e.g., general damages, funeral cover, loss of support, loss of income, and past and future medical expenses) covering road-accident victims and their families. The Fund receives more than R45 billion per year through the fuel levy. The current rules do provide that when a medical-aid scheme covers treatment related to a road accident, these claims can be recovered from the RAF to ensure that members' reserves are protected.

Unfortunately, the proposed changes to legislation suggest that medical-scheme members be treated differently to those who do not belong to a medical aid, despite contributing equally to the fuel levy. One of the main concerns regarding the changes is that medical-aid members will not be able to claim back past medical expenses. Such an amendment will adversely impact those who belong to a medical aid seeing that such persons or their family will not be able to claim medical expenses back after an accident and this must be covered by the respective medical aid or member savings. This proposal will thus negatively impact medical-aid members' medical savings and can lead to increases in medical-aid contributions. This could further affect reserves of medical-aid schemes, which could lead to further legal challenges and medical-aid schemes will be forced to reconsider benefits.

The PSA is not in support of such amendments. Whilst specific details of these proposals may vary, the PSA is closely monitoring the situation to ensure that the interest of the Union's members and their access to quality healthcare are protected.

The PSA further encourages open dialogue and collaboration between all stakeholders, including government, to find solutions that will safeguard the well-being of the broader society and those of public-sector employees and retired public servants.

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