

MEDIA RELEASE

PSA welcomes Minister's move to engage GEMS Trustees on unaffordable premium hikes

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EMBARGO

None

ENQUIRIES

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) welcomes Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi's recent commitment to engage with Government Employees Medical Scheme (GEMS) trustees concerning the rapid increase in medical aid contributions. Although overdue, this intervention marks a critical acknowledgement of the financial strain that public servants and their families have been experiencing.

Recent premium hikes of approximately 13.4% for 2025 and 9.8% for 2026 have placed an unsustainable burden on PSA members, forcing many to consider forgoing essential medical cover to afford basic necessities like food. These across-the-board increases came despite the PSA's strong objection, along with other unions, during negotiations in the Public Service Co-Ordinating Bargaining Council.

The intention to formally engage GEMS trustees over unaffordable rates is therefore both timely and encouraging. Although this response is long overdue, we appreciate the Minister's recognition of the issue. We trust that his engagement with GEMS trustees will lead to greater affordability and fairness for all scheme beneficiaries. However, the PSA commends the Minister's noble intent to collaborate constructively in pursuit of a fair, sustainable medical scheme for public servants. As the discussions progress, the PSA will continue to advocate vigorously for measures ensuring that no public service worker has to choose between healthcare and basic living expenses.

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