



FOR PSA MEMBERS: **PUBLIC SERVICE COORDINATING BARGAINING COUNCIL (PSCBC)**

12-11-2025

PSA makes representation to Portfolio Committee on Public Service and Administration on challenges facing GEMS

Members are aware that the PSA has been vocal about the *status quo* at the Government Employees Medical Scheme (GEMS) and such has led to the invitation by the Portfolio Committee on Public Service and Administration.

Subsequently, the PSA appeared before the Committee on 5 November 2025. The PSA made a presentation on the challenges and governance of GEMS and highlighted the following:

- GEMS has deviated from the founding principle of affordability as the Scheme is now unaffordable to members.
- Annual medical premium increases are exorbitant and mostly higher than the salary increase received by public servants, thus wiping the increase.
- Inadequate provision of day-to-day budget and insufficient benefits allocation resulting in many members depleting budgets in the third quarter, forcing them to pay from their pockets to access medical care.
- Irrational policy of restricted hospital network, which is unfair to members as some are forced to drive long distances, passing nearby hospitals that are not part of the network, or forced to pay a co-payment, which can be as high as 30%.
- The GEMS disregard for the views of members and their representative unions as it does not consult on good faith. A case in point is the recent increases that were implemented despite these being rejected at the PSCBC by unions.
- Cancellation of membership for pensioner members whilst waiting for payment of their pension money, forcing them to reapply upon receiving their payments. Subsequently, they are subjected to a three-months waiting period, which is inhumane.
- Administrative inefficiency and poor service delivery in that claims are taking forever to be paid, and email communications are not responded to timeously. Members struggle to get assistance and much-needed information whilst they are paying on monthly basis.
- Failure to create value for money for members through partnerships, including gyms, to encourage healthy living and wellness.

The Portfolio Committee has directed GEMS to respond to the issues raised by the PSA and for GEMS to openly engage with stakeholders. The PSA will continue to engage with GEMS and explore available remedies to force GEMS to comply with the founding principles of the provision of affordable and cost-effective medical cover to all employees.

Employees who want to join the PSA can visit the PSA's website or contact PSA Provincial Offices.

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GENERAL MANAGER