

Conference set to bring fresh perspectives to healthcare reform plans

The Hospital Association of South Africa (HASA) will hold its annual conference this week in Cape Town from 21-22 September at the Cape Town International Convention Centre.



With healthcare at a critical juncture in South Africa, the theme of the conference "Reform Side by Side" is especially relevant. "A system only functions when it's connected and it's clear that the public and private sectors need to work side by side to bring about viable healthcare reform," says HASA chairman, Nkaki Matlala.

"The content of the 2011 event will encourage delegates and stakeholders in the healthcare industry to rethink, reconnect and reform the healthcare system in such a way that it can deliver quality, affordable healthcare to South Africans on a sustained basis," he says.

International speakers

The conference features a number of international speakers who will bring new perspectives to the topic of healthcare reform in South Africa. These individuals will share their experiences on transforming and developing sustainable healthcare systems. Speakers include:

- Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, Minister of Health (the Minister's address will be facilitated by Dr Bevan Goqwana, chairman of the Parliamentary Committee On Health);
- Dr Michael Thiede, Senior Health Economist at the University Hospital Heidelberg;
- Pedro Delgado, Executive Director for the Institute of Healthcare Improvement;
- Dr Ramon Castano-Yepes, MD, PhD, Colombia;
- Dr Mark Britnell, Chairman & Partner, Global Health Practice, KPMG;
- Heather McLeod, ENZCAM, University of Canterbury, New Zealand;
- Andrew Donaldson, Deputy Director General Public Finance, National Treasury;
- Prof Hoosen Coovadia, Emeritus Victor Daitz Professor of HIV/AIDS Research; Emeritus Professor of Paediatrics and Child Health, University of Natal; Director at Match, University of the Witwatersrand;
- Jessica Long, Accenture Development Partners;
- Dr Okore Okorafor, Health Economist, Mediclinic Southern Africa;
- Dr Jonathan Broomberg, CEO Discovery Health;
- Prof Alex van den Heever, Old Mutual Chair of Social Security Systems Administration and Management Studies, University of the Witwatersrand;
- Carla Faustino Coelho, International Finance Corporation Advisory Services in Public Private Partnerships; and
- Dr Nkaki Matlala, Chairman, HASA.

With the overhaul of South Africa's public healthcare system planned under National Health Insurance (NHI), topics covered at the conference will include the private sector's role in optimising universal access to quality healthcare in a resource-constrained environment and funding strategies to finance broad-based healthcare reforms.

Successful case studies of countries that have managed to increase the number of healthcare professionals will be showcased, while health economists will look into the potential impact of an additional tax on the medical scheme population. Implementing quality measurement and improvement programmes will also be on the agenda.

"We're looking for practical, pragmatic ways to improve South Africa's healthcare delivery and the conference will present an opportunity to explore ways of working together with government and coming up with new solutions," says Matlala.

"We hope to bring fresh perspectives to the debate around healthcare reform," he says.

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