

## Provincial Summit on HealthCare System A draft concept document

### Background and rationale

There have been many achievements in improving access to health care, however much more still needs to be done in terms of quality of care, making services available to all South Africans and ensuring better health outcomes. The government will aim to reduce inequalities in our health system, improve quality of care and public facilities, and boost our human resources and step up the fight against HIV and AIDS and other diseases. Health reforms will involve mobilisation of available resources in both private and public health sectors to ensure improved health outcomes for all South Africans.

Indeed, since 1994, there have been many changes in the South African healthcare system. Among the sector's notable achievements are:

- The department managed to convene the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> national health summit (2001 and 2004) with key recommendations for implementation.
- The setting of a national human resources plan to provide skilled human resources for healthcare adequate to take care of all South Africans.
- The development of a strategic framework for the human resource for health plan.
- The departments' outcome on inquiry into the various social security aspects of the South African Health System.
- The development of the Health Charter.
- In 2006, a National Consultative Health Summit forum was convened to focus on a range of issues towards improved health care system and service.
- The department managed to convene the private healthcare indaba in 2007.
- The development of a perspective on hospital for African Traditional Medicine.
- The creation of structures of governance in hospitals and healthcare system.
- In 2009, the department designed a powerful health programme of action - 10 point plan.
- The development of health strategic plan 2010 - 2013.

These forums and policies - when combined with institutional initiatives - have managed to bring the sense for change in racial composition, behaviour and service.

Notwithstanding these gains, the healthcare system has not adequately and entirely achieved its transformational goals. Some of these are: the two tier health system, inadequate human resource, low retention rates, an insufficient number of quality management of hospitals; perceived lack of fit between health professionals and the world of work and; the inability of the system to replace its specialist's work force in public health sector. These, and others, are outward indicators of much deeper problems which remain to be tackled. Much more needs to be done to create the healthcare system to discharge the expectations and aspirations of South Africa's people.

In practical terms, that the government will:

- Work together with all key sectors in our society through a social compact to continue to transform the health care.
- Introduce the National Health Insurance System (NHI) system, which will be phased in over the next five years. NHI will be publicly funded and publicly administered and will provide the right of all to access quality health care, which will be free at the point of service. People will have a choice of which service provider to use within a district. In the implementation of the NHI there will be an engagement with the private sector in general, including private doctors working in group practices and hospitals, to encourage them to participate in the NHI system.
- Improve quality standards for both public and private sectors, which will include specific targets for the provision of adequate numbers of workers at all levels of the health care system, including recruitment, training and filling of vacant posts. There will also be a focus on increasing health worker training output in the public sector - including through re-opening of nursing colleges. There will also be improvements in the working conditions and provision of decent wages for workers.
- Improve management and leadership skills at all levels of the health system, as well as meeting the national standards of quality care and ensuring an explicit accountability framework.
- Upgrade and improve public hospitals and clinics, as well as the administrative systems and buildings so that long queues and waiting times are reduced and improved quality care is available.
- Reduce the rate of new HIV infections by 50% through aggressive prevention campaign and expand access to appropriate treatment, care and support to at least 80% of all HIV positive people and their families. More resources will be devoted to strengthening the implementation of the national plan on HIV and AIDS and STI. Partnerships will be built with labour, business and community organisations to step-up the national fight against HIV and AIDS.
- Improve the health status of the population and achieve the health-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This will include measures to scale up HIV prevention, address the challenge of TB and reduce child HIV infection rates through upscaling the Prevention for Mother-To-Child Transmission of HIV to 95% in all districts.
- Accelerate the campaigns on health promotion and disease-prevention by changing social values and norms through common community action. Furthermore, communities will be encouraged to adopt healthy diets and to exercise and to take part in campaigns against drug and substance abuse.
- Continue to raise awareness about addressing sexual and reproductive health rights of women and strengthen the enforcement of these rights, as well as ensuring that they are incorporated in the HIV and AIDS programmes.
- Review existing drug policy and strategy to support effective implementation of the NHI and strengthen the managerial and technical capacity of government. Government will also conduct a feasibility study for the establishment of a state-owned pharmaceutical company.
- Invest in research and development in the health sector, including infant mortality research, HIV prevention technologies, health status surveys, development of new medicines, and indigenous knowledge systems.

The appointment of the current national and provincial leadership for the Department of Health in 2009 has added a new dimension to the transformative possibilities in health sector.

In 2009, the Ministry of Health introduced a national programme of action - 10 points which was widely supported by all Alliance partners and Mass Democratic Movement structures. This plan points to the need to revisit transformation issues in healthcare system and to move from its cruder and simplistic manifestations to a far deeper understanding institutional

cultures, democratisation of healthcare and its role in development. A number of issues are now before the sector. How will the outcomes be used to propel healthcare system forward? What areas require reconceptualisation? What new forms of support and development need to be implemented and by whom? What tasks are institutional and what tasks are the responsibility of the Ministry, and other bodies associated with the sector?

institutions and organizations to participate in a Summit to re-examine the direct and indirect role of health in development, to identify priorities in relation to systemic and national transformation goals and, decide on the most appropriate mechanisms for the govt , sector and the Ministry to communicate on these issues.

### **Aims and objectives of the Health Summit**

Accordingly, the Summit will seek to:

1. Revisit the notion of transformation to enhance its' focus from issues of healthcare service, management and access to communities and quality in relation to the core functions of healthcare;
2. Examine the role of health in provincial development agenda;
3. Identify and prioritise key objectives for the healthcare system in the short (1 to 2 years), medium (3-5 years) and long term (5-10 years) and;
4. Discuss the need, feasibility and possible modalities for more systematic and structured communication between the sector

### **Main issues to be examined**

The main transformation challenges to be examined by the summit are as follows:

1. *Access and success.* Under this topic, the summit will explore the fit between hospitals and the department, recruitment, the role of support services and institutional cultures in easing patients' passage through healthcare, and access at the point of service.
2. *Teaching, learning and curriculum transformation.* Here, the summit proposes to examine the role of health in the production and transmission of knowledge. What changes have taken place in curriculum, design and pedagogic approaches in response to the needs and circumstances of a new generation of health profession, the development needs of the country and its aspirations of global competitiveness?
3. *Democratic governance* of healthcare, including an examination of the effectiveness (or lack therefore) of structures or processes by which staff, managers and other stakeholders express their views and influence major decisions.
4. *The place of healthcare system in the post school education and training system* and the role of health sector in interacting with and strengthening other sectors of the system such as education, particularly their articulation on the training colleges and courses.
5. *Hospitals as socially responsive institutions.* What is the nature of the relationship of hospitals with communities, business and government (at all levels) as well as other external constituencies such as schools, NGOs and funding agencies?
6. *Interactions between the hospital sector and the Department of Health.* What protocols and structures are needed to facilitate seamless, co-operative and constructive modes of communication between the government, through the Ministry of Health and the Department and social partners in the HealthCare Community?

## **Summit outputs and outcomes**

The Summit will serve a number of purposes and result in a number of outputs. These include:

- A forum for all the major stakeholders in the provincial health sector to meet, exchange views and debate some of the critical issues affecting the sector.
- If sufficient consensus can be obtained, a Summit Declaration will be adopted elucidating a set of principles and understandings as regards the purpose, role and direction for the Healthcare system in the province.
- A report of the summit, including all the papers presented, an account of the proceedings and debates and the Summit Declaration, will be produced and distributed to all participants and will be made available more broadly through both hard copy.
- Recommendations of the Summit regarding the establishment of a permanent forum for ongoing consultation between, various stakeholders, and the department and among the various stakeholders themselves.
- All the above outcomes will act as a guide and point of reference to the continuing work of the Department, hospitals, workers, students and other government departments.