

Motsoaledi starts health overhaul

Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi says the government will be advertising 92 hospital CEO posts to correct the issue of wrong placements, wrong qualifications and wrong experience or level.



(Image: GCIS)

The government will be advertising 92 hospital CEO posts this weekend, says Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi.

This is part of the Department of Health's efforts to prepare for the National Health Insurance (NHI) system. In addition, all sections of the National Health Act of 2003 will be coming into force next Thursday.

"This will correct the issue of people in acting CEO positions, wrong placements, wrong qualifications and wrong experience or level," Dr Motsoaledi told a briefing in Pretoria yesterday.

Sections of the act related to governance will "allow us to ensure that hospitals are

"[CEO positions will be] properly designated and the correct manager with the skills, knowledge and behavioural attributes [will be] managing the institution", he said.

"There will be no hospital in the country whose CEO is below the level of a deputy director-general," Dr Motsoaledi said.

It won't fix the problem

However, Alex van den Heever, Old Mutual chair of social security at Wits University, said simply ensuring CEOs had the required credentials would not fix SA's poor public health system.

"The regulations don't go far enough. What the system lacks are formal accountability structures - district oversight

supervisory structures.

"Internationally, hospitals have strong structures that are depoliticised and can hire and fire a CEO, or someone working in a district. None of the structures in the National Health Act envisions that," Prof van den Heever said.

Dr Motsoaledi said hiring and firing staff was not the prerogative of the national government ... "the executing authority is the MEC".

Prof van den Heever said the public health system had not only been degraded by a lack of qualifications, but also by how people were appointed and their lack of supervision. "It was a political process, and this has not been addressed at all," he said.

Dr Motsoaledi was speaking at the launch of the South African Health Review 2011 and the Provincial Health Barometer.

Health Systems Trust research committee chairwoman Laetitia Rispel said health spending had doubled in the past 15 years, but "output remains poor".

A national facility audit, to be completed later this year, has already found that 74% of the 82% of institutions inspected did not comply with vital cleanliness measures; and 66% failed in patient safety. The audit will pave the way for the NHI.

Source: *Business Day* via I-Net Bridge

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