

MEDIA RELEASE

26 February 2016

Second week of public hearings concludes

The second week of the public hearings held by the Competition Commission's Private Healthcare Market Inquiry (HMI) has come to an end.

The hearings, which took place at the HMI Pretoria offices, saw passionate pleas from medical practitioners of various professions for the HMI to address varying concerns in the sector. Practitioners raised issues in relation to their relationships with healthcare funders (medical schemes) and facilities. Issues raised range from concerns regarding clinical coding systems, information regarding Prescribed Minimum Benefits, timeous payments for services rendered and admission rights in hospitals.

Dr Kgabane Moloto, a Psychiatrist, accused hospitals of excluding certain practitioners from being able to practice on their premises.

Cardiologist Dr. Jeffery King, argued that doctors costs are not the reason for the increases in the cost of private healthcare.

The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA), which was heavily criticized by medical practitioners for not providing adequate guidance, admitted that it experienced challenges in protecting the public and would continue to review the ethical tariffs.

The South African Medical Association (SAMA) also admitted that "Preferred Provider Networks" are problematic for sustainable and quality private healthcare.

Other submissions came from the South African Optometry Association (SAOA), Iso Leso Optics Ltd, the South African Medical Device Industry Association (SAMEDI), The South African Society of Anaesthesiologists (SASA), the Independent Community Pharmacy Association (ICPA) and the Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa (PSSA).

The HMI panel now moves to Cape Town for the 3rd leg of the public hearings. Proceedings will resume on Tuesday, 1 March 2016 at the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC) at 08:30. The Board of Healthcare Funders of Southern Africa, Bestmed Medical Scheme and Government Employees Medical Scheme (GEMS), are some of the stakeholders expected to make submissions next week.

The Inquiry calls on all ordinary members of the public to come and share their experience of the private healthcare sector.

All non-confidential submissions are now available on the website:

<http://www.compcom.co.za/week-2-public-hearings/>

Watch: Broadcast of all hearings on our YouTube channel: <http://tinyurl.com/q2x5ca2>

For live updates, follow us on Twitter @CompComSA #HMI

For more information:

Itumeleng Lesofe, Spokesperson

012 394 3287/ 073 805 7733/ ItumelengL@compcom.co.za