

Our Reference: Mr Clint Oellermann

14 January 2016

TO: ALL STAKEHOLDERS

NOTICE: PROGRAMME FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR THE HEALTH MARKET INQUIRY

1. The Panel of the Health Market Inquiry (HMI) herewith gives notice to all stakeholders of the programme for public hearings, which are planned for the period 16 February 2016 to 9 June 2016.
2. The **Appendix** to this notice sets out the general timetable of the intended **six** sets of public hearings that the HMI will be conducting and the subject matter that will mainly be covered in each set. The HMI reserves the right to adjust this general plan of hearings, if the need arises. The formal hearing notices required by paragraph 23.7 of the *Guidelines for Participation*, dated 1 August 2014, will in each instance be published in due course. Where practicable, pre-hearing consultations will be held with participants as contemplated in paragraph 26 of those *Guidelines*.
3. Should you require further clarity regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact the Inquiry Director at clinto@healthinquiry.net.

Yours Faithfully

Mr. Clint Oellermann

Inquiry Director

(Not signed due to electronic transmission)

Appendix

Health Market Inquiry (“HMI”) Public Hearing Programme

(The number of days for each set of hearings is an estimate and remains subject to unforeseen circumstances.)

Sequence and title	SUBJECT MATTER TO BE PROBED	PUBLIC HEARINGS
<p>1st set of hearings</p> <p>General issues</p>	<p>SETTING THE SCENE: The HMI will explain its role, work done to date, and areas of interest that need to be probed further after consideration of stakeholder submissions at various stages of the HMI.</p> <p>The HMI would like to hear from all stakeholders in the private healthcare sector, which includes consumers and consumer groups; service providers comprising hospital groups and practitioners; funders and financiers, which include brokers, schemes, administrators and managed care organizations; regulators and policy makers.</p> <p>The purpose of this session is to gain an understanding of how all stakeholder groups interact with one another and their experience in interacting with one another. This will assist in gaining a better understanding of the nature of the private healthcare sector; how private healthcare services are provided and funded; and the regulatory regime for the private healthcare sector. In addition, the HMI would like to understand the impact, if any, the regulatory framework on stakeholders.</p> <p>Interested people may participate as individuals or may be represented by consumer interest groups. Participation is open to everyone who has a relevant contribution to make, whether as a patient, a practitioner, as someone wanting to join a medical scheme, or otherwise.</p> <p>In relation to consumers, the HMI wants to know more about how consumers access, evaluate and use information to make health related decisions. It wishes to hear views on whether greater access to relevant, understandable information would empower consumers to make better healthcare choices that could drive the market towards meaningful competition on quality and price.</p> <p>It is important for the HMI to understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how decisions are made about — <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ which medical scheme to join and which plan to buy ○ which practitioner to visit ○ which health facility to make use of, and ○ what care is appropriate • what factors (e.g. tariffs, quality, experience, referral etc.) play a role in consumers’ decision making. <p>The HMI appreciates that in health markets consumers rely on advice to make decisions. People who provide advice, or should do so, as agents for consumers would include brokers who assist individuals or companies to choose medical aids, or medical aid packages. They also include doctors who help patients decide what treatment they need or where to go for care.</p>	<p>16 – 18 February 2016 (Pretoria)</p> <p>23 – 25 February 2016 (Durban)</p> <p>1 – 3 March 2016 (East London)</p> <p>8 – 10 March 2016 (Cape Town)</p>

	<p>There may also be agents who assist medical facilities in choosing equipment and supplies.</p> <p>The HMI wants to hear the views of consumers and other purchasers on the role agents play in assisting and guiding them in obtaining and processing relevant information and making appropriate decisions.</p> <p>In relation to regulators in the health care sector that are responsible for representing the interests of the public, the HMI is interested in the explanations their role in the private healthcare sector</p> <p>These hearings will include an examination of the role to be played, if any, by national health insurance (NHI) in extending public access to private health care services.</p>	
<p>2nd set of hearings</p> <p>Availability of information about health care</p>	<p>This second set of hearings will concentrate in more detail on the availability, quality and ease of understanding of information required to make the best possible decisions at every level of the private health care sector.</p> <p>Here the HMI will explore the impact of unequal information across the bargaining table (information asymmetry) and lack of sufficient information (imperfect information).</p> <p>The practical possibilities of bringing about improvements in this regard will be explored.</p>	<p>29 – 31 Mar 2016 (Location to be determined after pre hearing consultations)</p>
<p>3rd set of hearings</p> <p>Competitive dynamics of the private health care sector as a whole</p>	<p>The HMI will explore generally the competition that exists among health sector stakeholders, and the relationships between them. This set of hearings will concentrate mainly on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there effective competition among medical schemes, medical scheme administrators, and managed health care companies? • Is there effective competition among healthcare practitioners? • Is there effective competition among private hospitals? • If competition is not effective, why is that the case and what can be done about it? <p>Associations representing funders, private hospitals, healthcare practitioners and suppliers of medicines and medical products will be afforded an opportunity to present their perspectives on the issues stated above. While presenters may draw on the information contained in existing submissions, this is not an occasion to re-present those submissions as they have already been taken into consideration and, where not confidential, have been published on the HMI website.</p>	<p>12 – 14 April 2016 (Location to be determined after pre hearing consultations)</p>
<p>4th set of hearings</p> <p>Competitive dynamics among funders</p>	<p>The HMI will explore in more technical detail the competition that exists among medical schemes, medical scheme administrators and managed healthcare companies. This set of hearings will concentrate on analyses done by the HMI and some stakeholders in their various submissions.</p>	<p>3 – 5 May 2016 (Location to be determined after pre hearing consultations)</p>
<p>5th set of hearings</p> <p>Competitive dynamics among service providers</p>	<p>The HMI will explore in more technical detail competition that exists among healthcare practitioners and private hospitals. This set of hearings will concentrate on analyses done by the HMI and some stakeholders in their various submissions.</p>	<p>17 – 19 May 2016 (Location to be determined after pre hearing consultations)</p>

<p>6th set of hearings</p> <p>Regulatory framework</p>	<p>The HMI will explore whether the health regulatory environment enhances or hinders competition among sector stakeholders, and thus access to quality health care by all. Main issues to be considered include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are policy objectives set for the benefit of the general public being met? • How to enhance the South African health policy environment with reference to relevant international experience? • Interaction between the public and private health sectors in South Africa. • Interaction between market failure and Government failure, i.e. misdirected or ineffective regulation. 	<p>7 – 9 June 2016</p> <p><i>(Location to be determined after pre hearing consultations)</i></p>
--	---	--