

# Gauteng ready to pilot NHI

The Gauteng provincial government has announced plans to kick-start its pilot projects for the National Health Insurance (NHI).

The Health Department was allocated a NHI conditional grant of R31.5 million for the current financial year for implementation in Tshwane district, one of the 11 NHI pilots in the country.

The department said coverage would focus on both the urban and rural mix, particularly the most vulnerable. A phased approach will be taken to implement the pilot project, targeting as large a population as possible within a district.

"This should ensure improvement in both the access to and quality of the health services in these areas. The benefits of these shall be improved perception of public health services," said the department in a statement.

The first phase of implementation will be in Sub-District 2 - which includes clinics in Tambo, Mandisa Shiceka, Kekanastadt, Suurman, Diloppe, New Eersterus, Kekana Gardens, Ramotse, Jubilee Gateway, Themba Community Health Centre and Refentse MOU - and in Sub-District 3 - which includes clinics in Skinner Street, Bophelong, Folang, Hercules, Laudium, Danville, Atteridgeville, Gazankulu, Lotus Garden, Phomolong, and Saulsville. In addition upgrades will also be done at the Laudium Community Health Centre.

Authorities have also set up the Quality Assurance Unit and the provincial Office of Standard Compliance. The office of standard compliance has an inspectorate which comprises nurses, environmental officers, medical technologists and retired nurses.

Among other things, they monitor infection controls, cleanliness, staff attitudes, patient safety and availability and waiting times in line with the NHI norms and standards.

The Quality Assurance Unit has conducted self-assessment exercises to test the compliance of all facilities in the province with these norms and standards. Training was also provided to quality assurance teams in all facilities throughout the province.

Also, seven primary health care teams have been established servicing Olievenhoutbosch, Atteridgeville, Mamelodi, Refilwe and Kekana Gardens.

"These teams of community health workers will provide outreach services into the communities, visiting homes, identifying needs and making intervention, which including referring those who are sick to the clinic or hospital. Twenty of these teams will be established in the province this year," said the department.

Twenty-two school-based primary health care teams have also been established to service 521 schools. These teams will assist in screening learners and assessing barriers to learning such as sight problems, hearing problems and oral hygiene.

The department said it was in the process of appointing District Clinical Specialist Support Teams who will work hand-in-hand with the teams and support clinics. These include an obstetrician, family physician, paediatrician, anaesthetist, advanced midwife, clinically trained nurse, and paediatric nurse.

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