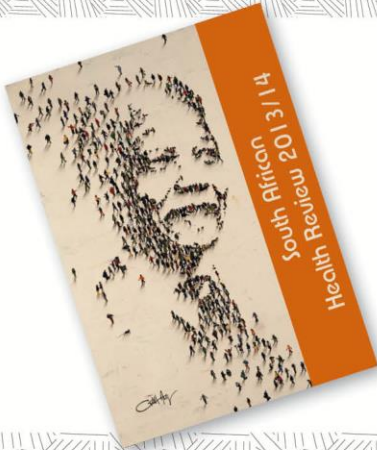




# HEALTH SYSTEMS TRUST



## NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE AND SOUTH AFRICA'S PRIVATE SECTOR

SAHR KWIK SKWIZ SERIES

### This KWIK SKWIZ:



summarises Chapter 9 of the 2013/14 South African Health Review.

- South Africa and high-quality healthcare resources in the private sector, but these are used by under 30 per cent of the population.
- The funding for private healthcare is sourced mainly through medical aid schemes, and just under 17 per cent of the population belongs to a medical scheme.
- The country's plans for achieving universal healthcare coverage in the form of National Health Insurance (NHI) seek to address this inequity.
- There is uncertainty as to how NHI will be financed, and how much of a burden this financing will place on the various stakeholders.
- The medical scheme environment has not been sufficiently subject to regulatory attention to ensure the stability, sustainability and affordability of such medical schemes. This is a concern for the advancement of NHI, preparations for which will be compromised by increasing volatility in the medical scheme environment.
- Civil society and private health sector stakeholders have an important role to play in support of NHI policy development, but substantive and meaningful engagement of this nature has been limited thus far.
- Despite a lack of formal consultation between the private health sector and government, there is a significant degree of goodwill in the private sector to participate in the NHI reforms towards the ultimate goal of universal healthcare coverage.
- The opportunity exists to leverage the expertise and assets of the private health sector to support and sustain NHI implementation at the level of quality desired for universal coverage.
- There is the potential for a range of roles for medical schemes both in the period prior to implementation of NHI, and afterward. However, such activation can only occur if the challenges faced by the medical scheme industry are effectively addressed.
- For as long as various NHI design issues remain unresolved, uncertainty and anxiety among stakeholders will prevail.

**SOURCE:**

Ramjee S, Vieyra T, Abraham M, Kaplan J, Taylor R. National Health Insurance and South Africa's private sector. In Padarath A, English R, editors. South African Health Review 2013/14. Durban: Health Systems Trust; 2014.

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**HST welcomes comments on this publication.**

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