



## PRESS RELEASE

Reference: Humphrey Zokufa takes over reins at CMS  
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### **Press release 7 of 2016: Dr Humphrey Zokufa takes over reins at CMS**

The Council for Medical Schemes (CMS), regulator of the medical schemes industry, this week welcomed Dr Humphrey Zokufa as the new Chief Executive and Registrar.

Following a period of over two years without a permanent Registrar, Dr Zokufa takes over the reins at the regulatory body at a critical time in the history of the R151.6 billion medical schemes industry, with a subscription of over 8.81 million beneficiaries across the country.

In his maiden address to the CMS employees, Zokufa pledged his commitment to work hard to ensure that the regulator performs at optimal level to fulfil its mandate within the context of South Africa's transformation agenda and in line with the provisions of the Medical Schemes Act, 131 of 1998. According to Zokufa, alignment to the country's vision for universal healthcare is very important to the optimum performance, and survival of the regulator body. The CMS is expected to operate in line with the government's policies to make a meaningful contribution to the overall improvement of the country's healthcare system, he said. "One of the key roles expected from the CMS is to advise the Minister of Health on policy issues. It is imperative for the regulator to get actively involved at a soft pencil stage of any healthcare policy development, in order to influence the outcome," Zokufa emphasised.

Expressing his vision about the role of the CMS regarding the proposed National Health Insurance (NHI), Zokufa said: "Section 27 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa places an obligation on the state to ensure access to healthcare services by all citizens. This includes the state having to effect legislative changes if needs

be. Based on literature review, the NHI is the route to the provision of universal healthcare for the people of South Africa. It is the right thing to do. Pooling together the financial resources collected by the public sector towards healthcare services (about R170 billion), and those collected through the medical schemes industry (R151.6 billion in 2015), should be enough to support the NHI - and this is where the CMS as regulator, must play a leading role towards bringing about the necessary changes to make this a reality". According to Zokufa, the current fragmented approach in the funding of public vs private healthcare services, is a challenge that South Africa must deal with sooner rather than later, in line with the spirit of the Constitution of the country. The private healthcare sector only caters for 16% of the population, whose profile is gradually changing as the members get older and sicker. A worrisome situation, which Zokufa says cannot be viewed as sustainable in the long run.

The new Registrar thanked the former Acting Chief Executive & Registrar, Daniel Lehutjo, for his role in keeping the ship afloat over the past two and a half years. "It is my intention going forward to work towards positioning the CMS positively among key stakeholders in the external environment. To achieve this, it is important for us as a collective to deal swiftly with some key issues internally in order to strengthen the system," the Registrar concluded.

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