



## NATIONAL HEALTH LABORATORY SERVICE (NHLS) REPORT 10 OF 2016

22 November 2016

We can report that Hospersa met with the employer on 7 November 2016 to discuss a variety of outstanding matters:

**Core Skills Allowance:** The employer reported that the implementation of the Core Skills allowance (with effect from 1 August 2016) was being held up by the extension of the Core Skills Allowance in terms of the salary agreement to other health professionals requiring registration with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA). This was reported to include the following categories: Technical Trainer Officer, Scientist (Researcher), Laboratory Assistant, various jobs involving in quality assurance, Project Trainer, Laboratory Support, Generic Counsellor, and Phlebotomy Technician. Previously implementation was confirmed to be delayed to 1 October 2016, but the employer reported that the validation and auditing of categories had not yet been finalised. We requested that this process be expedited so that payment can be made along with the November 2016 payroll.

**Healthcare Committee:** This committee was tasked to deal with the possible increase in the number of medical aid schemes. As previously reported, the two schemes identified were Sizwe Medical Aid and Momentum Medical Schemes. However, after lengthy deliberations on the issue the parties recommended Momentum as the only scheme to be

added. This will then make it a total of four (4) medical schemes at the NHLS, and such recommendation has been submitted to ExCo for approval.

**“In-sourcing” Task Team:** As previously reported, the agreement provides for currently outsourced services such as gardening, security, drivers and cleaning services to be formalised again, or as it is known, to be “in-sourced”. It was reported that the first meeting of the task team only dealt with procedural issues and that the next meeting would take place on 9 November 2016.

**Working Hours:** The agreement provides for the consideration of a possible 40/45-hour work week. The employer reported that in its consultation with operational management, inputs from various areas were being collated. However, the employer could not present a report in this regard. We expressed our disappointment in the slow pace of progress on this important matter. We requested the employer to hasten the speed in which it is dealing with the unsustainable long working hours endured by our members.

**Proficiency Assessment:** Labour representatives' nominations were submitted to the employer for the various task teams/expert groups. They will be tasked to finalise the proficiency framework / matrix that will form the basis for assessing and placing healthcare professionals on the correct pay level / point in the

respective broad band salary scales. Again the employer could not report on significant progress, and again we expressed our dismay and demanded greater progress to be reported at the next meeting.

**Policy Review:** The employer undertook to circulate Disciplinary Policy and Conditions of Service Policy for inputs and discussion at the next meeting.

**AGM:** The Annual General Meeting (AGM) has been scheduled for 1 December 2016. The ER Manager undertook to make the necessary arrangements and circulate membership statistics to parties.

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