

JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

To: Editors and Health Journalists

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E2D COLLABORATION WILL ENSURE THAT THE BEST EVIDENCE INFORMS HEALTHCARE POLICY DECISION-MAKING IN SOUTH AFRICA

Pretoria: The implementation of National Health Insurance (NHI) will require extensive changes to the South African health system (including funding mechanisms, management structures, healthcare delivery platforms, and the scope of healthcare benefits covered), as well as the policies and regulations that govern the health sector.

The timely, proactive conduct and delivery of systematic evidence synthesis requires collaboration. The South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC), along with partners at Stellenbosch University's (SU) Centre for Evidence-Based Health Care (CEBHC), has a long track record of championing collaboration to engage with the NDoH and deliver evidence when needed to influence and impact evidence-informed decision-making in and for South Africa.

The Evidence to Decision (E2D) Partnership, launched in November 2024 and funded by the Department of Health, brings together the Health Systems Research Unit and Cochrane South Africa, both based at the SAMRC, with the CEBHC at SU.

"Key to the success of any evidence-support initiative to optimise evidence use and improve patient care is an ongoing collaborative working relationship. Such government-academic partnerships ensure timely research-evidence products," says Prof. Nicholas Crisp, the Deputy Director-General for National Health Insurance at the Department of Health.

The E2D collaboration aims to support and build capacity for health and social care decision-making through timely and responsive evidence production and translation for efficient, effective, and equitable health services and systems, and to learn from the process of building this E2D infrastructure and collaboration.

Prof Elmi Muller, Dean of Stellenbosch University's Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences highlights the university's commitment to the partnership. "We are deeply committed to advancing evidence-informed health policy through rigorous research and strategic partnerships. The E2D initiative marks a pivotal evolution in our long-standing collaboration with the SAMRC and the National Department of Health, building a national infrastructure for systematic evidence synthesis and translation. Our Centre for Evidence-Based Health Care has consistently championed methodological excellence, responsiveness to policy priorities, and capacity development in evidence use".

"As a health and medical research council in the country, the SAMRC is well placed to provide research leadership to this vital initiative," says Prof. Ntobeko Ntusi, President and CEO of the SAMRC. "We are delighted to be part of this collaboration, which builds on our long-term relationships with the National Department of Health and Stellenbosch University. The SAMRC has been involved in promoting the highest standards in evidence-based research work via our work with Cochrane and others for decades and remains committed to improving the health of all South Africans by ensuring that high-quality, responsive research informs healthcare practices and policies."

For more information and media enquiries, please contact:

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