



FROM THE OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL CHAIRPERSON

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Dear Colleagues

As the recent unrest and consequent looting and other acts of violence hit Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal, hospitals, ambulances, pharmacies, practices and health centres have felt the additional strain on top of the already challenging and ongoing fight against COVID-19. Some of our colleagues have been directly affected, while others had to deal with the consequences due to closure, safety issues, and the inability to remain functional.

Many of us cannot imagine the devastation that was caused, nor the emotional and financial impact on the affected colleagues and their families. Sometimes the psychological impact is even greater than the physical loss of income or property. We now unfortunately face the daunting task of rebuilding and/or replacing what was lost.

SAMA will be assisting our affected members where we can by expediting and prioritising claims with SASRIA, which provides cover against incidents of public violence, strikes, riots and unrest, and with interacting with some of our financial services and insurance partners to find solutions to best assist our members.

A decision was taken at the Inter-Ministerial Committee meeting on 25 July that there will be no further prioritisation of essential public services or sectors for vaccination. However, those projects that commenced will be completed. This includes the DoD and Military Veterans.

SAMA was able to obtain an extension on submissions for the Certificate on Need issue. During the next few weeks we will communicate on this contentious issue by informing the public and the media on this issue with the hope that this will foster understanding, and focus on the impact this will have for medical doctors if implemented.

In a recent Free Market Foundation presentation, Patrick Bracher, SA director of Norton Rose Fulbright said "... the hope of everyone should be that the government recognises the impossibility of implementing the NHI Bill'." Instead, Bracher said, we should hope the government fulfils its obligation to fix existing healthcare systems. He said, "... that would be better than conducting endless talk-shops while hospitals deteriorate, and doctors are forced to decide who lives and who dies."

I would like to take this opportunity to invite all colleagues to register for the SAMA Conference. The theme of the conference is "Practising during a Pandemic", which I think will be relevant for all. We have world-renowned speakers participating in this event who will share their expertise and insights. The conference will take place virtually 21 August, 22 August and 29 August 2021. Registration and programme information is attached to this communication.

Thank you for all the effort and hard work you are doing during these trying times.

Be safe.

Yours in Solidarity

Dr. Angelique Coetzee
SAMA: Chairperson

