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Rosebank Health Village: multiple services in one location

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Growthpoint Healthcare Property Holdings (GHPH) has completed the R100m Rosebank Health Village in Johannesburg, developed in partnership with healthcare provider Epione. The integrated facility offers primary care, specialist consultations, diagnostics, pharmacy services and a 20-bed day hospital with two operating theatres, enabling patients to access multiple services in one location. The project is the first in a planned network of health villages across SA, with possible expansion into Africa. GHPH says the development supports its strategy of investing in specialised healthcare property while reflecting growing demand for outpatient care and purpose-built medical facilities that offer convenient, cost-effective healthcare.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

SA's healthcare solution lies between NHI and private care

SA's healthcare solution lies between NHI and private care

The NHI conundrum – and the provision of universal healthcare to South Africans – should not just boil down to either one option or the other, argues Ziyad Motal, Professor of Law at Howard University School of Law in Washington, DC in a ***News24*** opinion article (15 July 2026).

"The debate over healthcare in SA has too often been framed as a choice between a state-run NHI and an unregulated private market. That is a false choice.

"The real challenge is to use the existing institutions and infrastructure while making them serve the broader public interest."

"The legal challenge to the NHI Act has exposed a dilemma that SA has avoided confronting honestly. Almost everyone agrees that universal healthcare is a constitutional imperative. Many also agree that the SA state currently lacks the administrative capacity, institutional credibility and financial resources to implement a comprehensive single-payer system on the scale contemplated by the NHI."

Motala writes: "South Africans have lived through too many scandals and too many failures to place blind faith in promises from Government. The record of state-owned enterprises, municipalities and provincial departments provides ample grounds for scepticism. It would be foolish to pretend otherwise."

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NEWS FROM GOVERNMENT

High Court requested to open R165m hospital

Mogalakwena Health requested an urgent High Court order after the newly completed R165m Mogalakwena Health Private Hospital in Potgietersrus, Mokopane was prevented from opening because provincial authorities refused to conduct its final inspection.

The company argues that Limpopo Health officials incorrectly interpreted the Constitutional Court's ruling striking down the National Health Act's Certificate of Need provisions.
The officials claim that the judgment did not invalidate Regulation 158, which governs the inspection and registration of private hospitals.
The 65-bed facility, completed in March 2026, cannot admit patients or secure accreditation without a registration certificate and is reportedly losing R105,000 a day while standing empty.
Mogalakwena Health requested the Court to compel the Limpopo Department of Health to inspect the hospital and issue the required certificate if it meets regulatory standards.
- ***Business Day*** (16 July 2026)

Assets to be seized from alleged Tembisa-linked looter

The Gauteng High Court ordered the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) to attach luxury homes and exotic cars – valued at R327m – belonging to Hangwani Morgan Maumela. He has been implicated as a kingpin in the Tembisa Hospital looting scandal.

Gauteng Health CFO Babita Deokaran was assassinated in 2021 after spotting the fraud at the Tembisa Hospital.
Maumela's assets include top-end properties in Gauteng, KZN and the Western Cape, while the vehicles include several Lamborghinis.
According to NPA spokesperson, Kaizer Kganyago, the forfeiture application was the result of the extensive forensic investigations precipitated by Deokaran's report and to which Maumela was eventually linked. - ***MedicalBrief*** (22 July 2026)

FINANCIAL NEWS

Checkers Sixty60 pharmacy delivery threatens Clicks and DisChem

Shoprite Group's Sixty60 delivery platform is poised to reshape SA's pharmacy market by extending its fast, reliable delivery model beyond groceries.
While some Medirite products are already available through Sixty60, a broader rollout of pharmacy items and prescription services could significantly strengthen Shoprite's position against Clicks and Dis-Chem.
Unlike its rivals, Shoprite may not need hundreds of pharmacies because its extensive logistics network allows each Medirite outlet to serve a much larger area through home delivery.
Clicks, whose deliveries can take one to three days, has acknowledged increasing competition from retailers and online platforms, while Dis-Chem is investing in faster delivery and more efficient stores.
- ***Moneyweb*** (30 July 2026)

Fake sick notes cost businesses billions"

"Allegations that high-profile figures feigned illness to avoid appearing before the Madlanga Commission of Inquiry have renewed scrutiny of fake medical certificates and sick leave abuse in SA."

Fraudulent sick notes contribute to absenteeism, lost productivity and billions of rand in economic losses. Employers often struggle to challenge certificates issued by registered doctors, even when their validity is questionable.
According to online healthcare platform Unu Health, absenteeism costs the economy about R19bn annually, with labour experts believing fraudulent medical certificates account for a significant portion.
Labour expert Andrew Levy warned that knowingly submitting a false sick note could constitute a criminal offence. – ***The Citizen*** (22 July 2026)

Dis-Chem founder leaves board after 48 years

Dis-Chem co-founder, Ivan Saltzman, has resigned from the pharmacy retailer's board after 48 years, bringing the founding family's formal boardroom involvement in the company to an end. - ***Business Day*** (27 July 2026)
His departure follows the resignation of his son, Saul Saltzman, who left the board with effect from 17 July. Dis-Chem described Ivan Saltzman's departure as the final stage of a phased succession process that began when Rui Morais replaced him as chief executive in July 2023.

Johnson & Johnson settles for $5.5bn to resolve lawsuits

Johnson & Johnson (J&J) announced that it would pay $5.5bn to resolve tens of thousands of lawsuits alleging its baby powder and other talc products cause ovarian cancer. – ***Reuters*** (27 July 2026)
J&J said the settlement covers about 69,000 cases consolidated in federal court in New Jersey and related cases in state court, totalling 99.75% of the remaining talc claims. Plaintiffs' law firms confirmed the deal, saying it was a good resolution after a decade-long court battle. The deal must be accepted by 95% of the ovarian cancer claimants in state or federal court before it becomes final.

PHARMACEUTICAL NEWS

FOCUS ON OBESITY

'HIV changed SA; Obesity should be next'

Millions of people who would once have died are alive today because activists, scientists, clinicians, policymakers and communities worldwide refused to accept that HIV treatment should remain out of reach.

– ***Bhekisisa*** (22 July 2026)

"Today obesity sits at a similar crossroads.
"Effective medicines exist, but they remain inaccessible for most South Africans. At the same time, illegal products flood social media while people living with obesity continue to be blamed for a condition that science increasingly understands as a chronic disease shaped by biology, environment and the food system as much as personal behaviour.
"Some of the most important lessons from HIV have nothing to do with a virus. They are about dignity, evidence, solidarity and the belief that everyone deserves effective healthcare."

Cheaper generic weight-loss products will soon be available

SAHPRA approved Sun Pharmaceutical Industries' request to manufacture and sell a generic semaglutide injection (for type 2 diabetes) in SA.

The product will be supplied as a pre-filled, multi-dose injectable pen (to be used once a week) in 2 mg and 4 mg strengths.
Semaglutide is the active ingredient in Novo Nordisk's diabetes medicine *Ozempic* and is also used in the company's *Wegovy* weight-loss treatment.
Novo Nordisk's patent on semaglutide expired in March, increasing expectations that local and international manufacturers will introduce lower-cost generic products.
- ***Reuters*** (16 July 2026)

Novo Nordisk to launch cheaper *Ozempic* copy in SA

Following the approval of the SA Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA), Novo Nordisk launched its more affordable copy of *Ozempic* in July.

- ***Reuters*** (21 July 2026)

According to Novo Nordisk, *Extensior* is manufactured using the same active pharmaceutical ingredient, production process and delivery device as *Ozempic*, but will be marketed under a different brand name.
Extensior will be available in the same three doses as *Ozempic:* 0.25 mg, 0.5 mg and 1mg.
The official price has not been announced yet.

Extensior price unlikely to expand medical scheme cover

Novo Nordisk's launch of *Extensior,* a lower-priced semaglutide alternative to *Ozempic*, will result in a 15% saving on treatment costs.
Although the price reduction will lower monthly expenses for people paying out of pocket, Discovery Health says it is not enough to justify expanding medical scheme funding for GLP-1 medicines. – ***Business Day*** (24 July 2026)

SAHPRA launches campaign against illicit medicines

The SA Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA) plans to launch a public awareness campaign to warn consumers about fake, falsified and substandard medicines and medical devices, reported ***Business Day*** (16 July 2026).
The campaign will run for four months each year over three years.
"Criminal syndicates are targeting widely used or in-demand medicines. These include weight-loss drugs, antibiotics, painkillers and medicines used to manage chronic diseases such as HIV.
"The regulator is particularly concerned about products sold online. Unregulated suppliers are also using social media platforms to reach consumers."
According to the National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications (NRCS), illicit or noncompliant products account for between 10% and 15% of SA's fast-moving consumer goods market. Products worth R382bn are traded annually within its regulatory space. National Treasury estimates that the broader illicit economy removes about R700bn from SA's gross domestic product each year and causes R100bn in annual losses to the fiscus.

SAHPRA takes iDexis to Court

SAHPRA has launched legal action against Pretoria-based compounding pharmacy iDexis, alleging it unlawfully manufactured and distributed large quantities of unregistered GLP-1 medicines containing semaglutide and tirzepatide. Following an inspection, SAHPRA seized products and claims the pharmacy exceeded the legal limits for compounding, which is intended only for individual patients with specific prescriptions.
- ***Reuters*** (24 July 2026)

The regulator argues the products pose potential risks because they have not undergone the required safety, quality and efficacy assessments.
iDexis denies the allegations, insisting its products were compounded legally, independently tested and supplied only on prescription. It has challenged SAHPRA's findings and plans to contest the matter in court.
"The case has become a landmark test of SA's regulation of compounded medicines amid soaring demand for weight-loss drugs and is expected to shape future enforcement and pharmacy practice."

Aspen to produce Merck's HIV prevention pill

The SA drugmaker Aspen Pharmacare secured a royalty-free voluntary licensing agreement with Merck to develop, manufacture and commercialise an experimental once-monthly oral HIV prevention pill called A*limatravir* (MK-8527)
Aspen is one of seven generic drug companies awarded the licence to distribute the pill across 129 low- and lower-middle-income countries. *Alimatravir* is designed to be taken as one tablet every month. Merck expects it to begin providing protection against HIV-1 within approximately one hour of being taken, with some flexibility around the monthly dosing date. – ***Bloomberg*** 27 July 2026)

GENERAL NEWS

ChatGPT sued over health advice that discouraged medical care

A US man launched a first-of-its-kind legal action, demanding damages and a suspension of Chat GPT Health, claiming that he was offered inaccurate medical guidance that resulted in delayed care for his pulmonary embolism.

OpenAI has also been accused of negligence, unlicensed practice of medicine and defective product design.
The case follows the launch of ChatGPT Health which lets users upload medical records and connect Apple Health data.
Reacting on the allegations, OpenAI CEO, Sam Altman, said ChatGPT is not a substitute for professional medical care and newer models are better at recognising uncertainty and advising users to seek medical attention.
Researchers raised concerns about the tool's accuracy, safety and potential bias, finding it sometimes underestimated medical emergencies. Experts say AI can improve access to health information but should support, not replace, qualified healthcare professionals' clinical judgement and care. – ***MedicalBrief*** (29 July 2026)

Private ambulandce industry seeks tariff exemption

"SA's private ambulance operators have urged the Competition Commission to allow them to negotiate tariffs and payment structures collectively with medical schemes, warning that the industry could face severe contraction without regulatory intervention."

The application was submitted by the SA Private Ambulance & Emergency Services Association (Sapaesa), which represents more than 120 private emergency medical service providers, including ER24.
Although collective tariff negotiations usually raise competition concerns because they involve competitors coordinating on prices, Sapaesa argues that an exemption is necessary to address the significant bargaining power held by medical schemes and their administrators.
According to the latest data, the public emergency medical services require approximately 6,228 ambulances but operate only about 4,007. – ***Business Day*** (20 July 2026)

HIV treatment for SA children decreased by 45%

Research presented at the International AIDS Conference found that the number of SA children receiving HIV treatment at PEPFAR-supported sites fell by 45% (30,880 children) in the year to September 2025. This is the largest decline among 21 high-burden countries.

Researchers linked the drop to cuts in US-funded PEPFAR support, which financed healthcare workers, technical assistance and programmes to identify and retain children in care.
Experts warned the reductions threaten SA's efforts to meet the UN's HIV treatment targets for children. They cautioned that interrupted care increases the risk of severe illness and death among HIV-positive children. – ***Business Day*** (22 July 2026)

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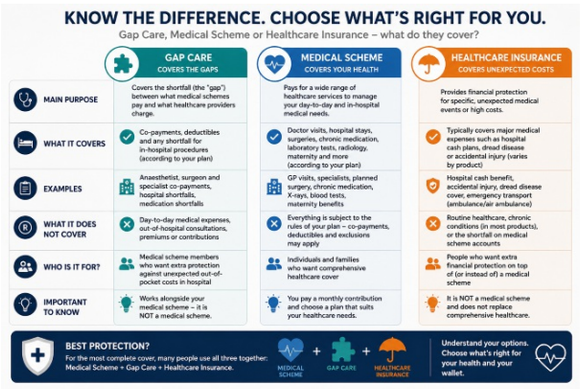
74 patients helped in ‘surgical marathon’ effort

Urology specialists and trainees from the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) helped treat 74 patients at several KZN hospitals during a five-day surgical marathon aimed at reducing elective surgery waiting lists in the public healthcare system. Staff and specialist trainees from UKZN’s Discipline of Urology joined public and private healthcare partners to perform complex procedures on patients who had been waiting for elective surgery. These included operations to correct congenital birth defects, reconstruct damaged urethras and remove kidneys or testes affected by cancer. The national campaign aims to treat at least 200 patients by the end of Mandela Month.
- ***MedicalBrief*** (22 July 2026).

Meanwhile, ***SABC News*** reported that a private hospital in Bloemfontein has partnered with the Free State Department of Health to address the backlog of more than 4 000 surgical cases, including cataract removal and urology procedures.

NEWS FROM MEDICAL SCHEMES



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'No one-size-fits all cover'

“There is no one-size-fits-all approach to healthcare cover,”
– ***BusinessTech*** (27 July 2026)
When deciding on a product, the most important thing is understanding that there are different products for different purposes. Therefore it is important to know what each product is designed to do, what it covers and where its limitations lie.
Choosing between medical scheme, medical insurance and gap cover depends on your healthcare needs, budget and the level of financial protection you want.
Medical schemes, regulated by the Medical Schemes Act, provide the most comprehensive private healthcare funding. Monthly contributions generally start from about R1,200 for entry-level plans, with benefits that may include hospitalisation, GP and specialist consultations, chronic medicine and emergency treatment. However, members may still face co-payments, waiting periods, benefit limits and provider network restrictions.
Medical insurance is a lower-cost insurance product designed to cover specific healthcare services rather than comprehensive medical expenses.
Premiums typically range from about R280 to R600 a month, covering benefits such as GP visits, prescribed medication, dentistry, optometry and selected diagnostic tests. Some policies also include accident or emergency benefits, but cover is limited to the services specified in the policy.
Gap cover is designed for people who already belong to a medical scheme. Starting from about R99 a month, it helps pay qualifying shortfalls between what a medical scheme reimburses and what specialists charge and may also cover certain co-payments or cancer-related costs. Experts advise consumers to assess their healthcare needs, budget and potential out-of-pocket expenses before deciding which combination of products best suits their circumstances.

AI Summary

Medscheme withdraws court bid

"Medscheme has withdrawn its High Court application against Bonitas Medical Fund, allowing the Council for Medical Schemes (CMS) to resume its forensic investigation into allegations surrounding procurement processes and potential conflicts of interest."
– ***Daily Maverick*** (17 July 2026)
"The dispute centred on tender awards for Bonitas's BonCap administration, managed-care services and marketing contracts. Medscheme alleged that some contracts were awarded to companies lacking the necessary experience, operational capacity and compliance credentials. However, these claims have never been tested in court and no findings of wrongdoing have been made against Bonitas, Private Health Administrators (PHA), Agile Business Solutions or any other party.
"Despite the legal challenge, Bonitas proceeded with appointing Momentum Health as its administrator and PHA as its managed-care provider after Medscheme's contracts expired.

Discovery needs 280,000 new members a year

Discovery Health, SA's largest open medical scheme, needs to recruit between 280,000 and 290,000 new members every year to maintain its current membership levels.

According to 2024-data from the Council for Medical Schemes (CMS) for the year ended December 2024, DHMS held a dominant 57.7% share of SA' open medical scheme market.
At the end of December 2025, Discovery had 1.368m principal members and 2.725m beneficiaries. Despite adding about 290,000 new members during 2025, the scheme's net membership base grew by only 0.66% and the total number of beneficiaries declined by 0.37%. Over the past decade, the number of people covered by open schemes has declined by approximately 3%, while growth has largely been limited to restricted schemes. - ***Moneyweb*** (20 July 2026)

HEALTHMAN DIARY

4 August:
PsychMg Exco

6 - 8 August:
PsychMg Congress

13 - 15 August:
SAAFP Congress

17 August:
SARAA - Exco

19 August:
RFS Webinar

20 August:
FCPSA BoD
Roadshow North West

22 August:
GEMS Healthcare Provider Summit - KuGomo City, Eastern Cape

24 August:
SARAA - AGM

27 August:
CPF BoD
Instopp AGM

28 August:
Young Surgeons Course
Surgicom BoD

29 - 30 August
Surgicom Congress

3 - 6 September:
USANA Conference 2026

17 September:
SASOP/PsychMg
Roadshow Durban

19 September
In conversation with GEMS
Bloemfontein, Free State

2 October:
BARIA link 10-year Anniversary Event
10:00

2 - 4 October:
ENT Conference – Lord Charles Hotel
Somerset Wes

21 October:
SASOP/PsychMg
Roadshow Gqeberha

22 October
SASOP/PsychMg
Roadshow East London

23 - 25 October:
PMG Congress - Irene Country Hotel

9 - 11 November:
Annual AGMHI Congress
Mombasa Kenya
Youth Mental Health in
Africa & Diaspora

25 - 26 November:
CISG 2026: Athletle Brain Health
Symposium, Century City, Cape Town

CMS CIRCULARS

CMS Circulars published in July 2026

No new circulars issued

SPECIAL NOTES

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