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## WHY TAC IS PROTESTING FOR A COMMITMENT TO INCREASE THE HEALTH BUDGET NOW!

### **Government has a constitutional duty to respect, promote, protect and fulfil the right to health.**

- Government is constitutionally obligated to ensure that adequate resources are devoted to advancing the right to health for all people living in South Africa. The resources it mobilises for health must be used appropriately.
- Health budgets must reflect the health needs of the people and government's constitutional duty to ensure access to health care services.

### **People are suffering and dying because of poor financial planning and budget management**

In the Free State people, are suffering and some may have died because of a moratorium on the province's ART roll-out. Since November 2008, no new patients have been enrolled onto life-saving antiretroviral therapy because of a financial crisis in the Free State Health Department.

- Most of the patients who are currently unable to access ARV treatment in the Free State have been on waiting lists for many months. Even before the ART moratorium was enacted and waiting lists suspended, the Free State Health Department was not enrolling enough new patients onto ART each month to meet the demand for treatment.
- Unnecessary death and suffering caused by lengthy ARV waiting lists, general health service cuts, poor planning, under-budgeting, and a lack of effective finance and budgeting systems are not limited to the Free State but are occurring in many other provinces around South Africa.
- **It is time to hold our leaders to account. We demand adequate budgets for health. We demand that resources allocated for health are used appropriately.**

- Every activist should commit to studying the PFMA – The Public Finance Management Act (Act 1 of 1999) as amended by the Public Finance Management Amendment Act (Act 29 of 1999). Every activist should educate our communities on how to hold government accountable. TAC will mount an awareness campaign to generate strengthen the public understanding of the Act.

### **We demand financial accountability and needs-based budgeting in the health system.**

- We call on all tiers of Government to collectively ensure that sufficient resources are devoted to the health services in order to fulfil the state's legal and constitutional duties including the realisation of the targets laid out in the *HIV & AIDS and STI Strategic Plan for South Africa, 2007-2011* (the 'NSP').
- We welcome the promise made by Health Minister Hogan at the UNAIDS meeting in Khayelitsha on 10 February that a team of 20 budgeting experts will be deployed to every province to ensure that financial crises do not continue to violate the health and human rights of South Africa.
- Government has promised that the ART moratorium will be lifted, but for people who are unable to access treatment, each day of delay is another day of suffering. TAC demands an end to the current moratorium on the ART roll-out in the Free State within the next few days.
- In addition to the team of budgeting experts, we also call on Government to commission an independent investigation into the financial crisis which led to the ART moratorium in the Free State and to effectively address the root causes of the crisis.
- Provincial governments must demonstrate that they comply with the legal commitments they entered into in 1999 under the PFMA to prepare, implement and oversee budgets.
- Minister Manuel and Treasury must commit to the ANC's Polokwane resolution on health care investment and commit to the ANC's 10 point programme on health care. He must also use his powers under the PFMA to ensure proper needs-based budgeting and sound financial systems.
- Minister Hogan must convene an urgent summit to deal with the emergency and to prepare for the 2010/11 budget.

### **We demand health budgets and financial systems that advance the right to health for all people in South Africa.**