

**Media release - Innovative Pharmaceutical Association of SA (IPASA)**

**Pharmaceutical industry welcomes 2015/2016 national health budget**

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The Innovative Pharmaceutical Association of South Africa (IPASA) says the pharmaceutical industry can play a vital role in contributing to government's goal of increasing life expectancy to 70 years by 2030 through the development of new medicines, as well as partnering with government to ensure medicines reach patients more efficiently.

This is after Minister of Health, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi's presented his department's R36.46 billion budget for 2015/2016 to Parliament in Cape Town, earlier this week.

"The health budget provides a focused outlook to a future that provides equitable, efficient, effective, quality healthcare and radically improves health outcomes," says IPASA CEO, Dr Konji Sebati. "Apart from continuously innovating to develop new chemical compounds to treat diseases, IPASA member companies are ready and willing to work with and support government, with knowledge sharing around supply chain management, logistics and inventory control to help strengthen South Africa's healthcare delivery system."

In his speech the Minister highlighted the dangers of an impending outbreak of antibiotic resistance which could hamper disease control efforts on a national scale. Dr Sebati said IPASA would continue to collaborate with government in awareness campaigns around infection control in health facilities and communities, as well as stepping up the development of new antibiotics.

"Our efforts are not only focused on developing ordinary antibiotics, but precision antibiotics to target specific organisms with fewer side effects and shorter treatment periods," she said. "This would continue to have major positive socio-economic benefits."

The Minister also said the department would focus on preventative care as a foundation for quality care, as it rolls out National Health Insurance (NHI). In 2009, the department introduced two new vaccines in the routine immunisation programme, namely the Pneumococcal conjugate vaccine and the rotavirus vaccine. He said these had been overwhelmingly successful, with the National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD) finding a 70% decline in invasive pneumococcal disease in children under the age of five, the second biggest cause of death of children under five years old in South Africa.

"IPASA members continue to spend billions of rand on research and development for vaccines, medicines, as well as diagnostics for TB, Malaria, HIV and other diseases plaguing South Africans," said Dr Sebati. "We are talking across the healthcare spectrum – from prevention to cure."

IPASA also welcomed the launch of Operation Phakisa Ideal Clinic, which aims to provide good clinical care and improve patients' healthcare experience in preparation for the implementation of NHI.