The Council of Medical Schemes (CMS) will be investigating claims of racial discrimination in healthcare

The Council of Medical Schemes has announced that it will be investigating claims of racial discrimination in healthcare. The Council made this commitment on Wednesday the 15th May 2019.

This investigation follows revelations by more than 1000 Black, Coloured and Indian healthcare practitioners who reported that they are not treated by Medical Aid Schemes in the same manner as are their white colleagues, and that they have endured being exploited and harassed over the years.

Some practitioners have come out detailing various experiences in this regard. The issues revolve around allegations of racial profiling, blacklisting for payments, blocked payments, demands of confidential clinical information, bullying and harassment, coercion, entrapment and the use of hidden cameras.

The CEO of the Council, Sipho Kabane, says they are opposed to any conduct involving racial profiling and harassment. "We are opposed to any conduct that includes racial profiling, harassment, bullying and blacklisting of service providers. These actions are not permissible by the Medical Schemes Act and the Constitution".

The CMS Investigating Panel have invited written submissions to be sent to cmsinvestigation@medical-schemes.com which should have been received by 19th of July 2019. Interviews and public hearings will be conducted from the 8th of July through to September. The final report is expected to be delivered by the Investigating Panel on 1 November 2019.

SADA is very much opposed to any racial behaviours and supports the appointment of the Investigation Panel. The Association awaits the conclusion of the hearings and the findings of the Panel. Should these allegations be proven to be true, it would be justice to see the culprits face the might of the law.

SADA has encouraged those members who may have relevant information or have suffered an experience as described above, to register with the Investigation Panel and to participate in the public hearings. SADA will be following this investigation very closely and from time to time we will inform our members of the progress and the outcome.