

Chapter Two: Key Strategic Issues: The 10 Point Plan

2.1 Introduction

The Department of Health plays a stewardship role in the implementation of the National Health Systems priorities for 2004-2009, by providing support and guidance to provinces. The Department's Strategic Plan for 2006/07 to 2008/09 serves as a vehicle for the implementation of these priorities.

2.2 Major elements of the Strategic Framework

The major priorities for the next five years are:

- Improve governance and management of the NHS
- Promote healthy lifestyles
- Contribute towards human dignity by improving quality of care
- Improve management of communicable diseases and non-communicable illnesses
- Strengthen primary health care, EMS and hospital service delivery systems
- Strengthen support services
- Human resource planning, development and management
- Planning, budgeting and monitoring and evaluation
- Prepare and implement legislation
- Strengthen international relations.

Table 1 provides examples of the key activities that will be undertaken for each of the priority areas.

Table 1
Key priorities and activities, 2004 - 2009

Priority	Key Activities
1. Improve governance and management of the NHS.	● Review and strengthen communication within and between health departments.
	● Strengthen corporate identity, public relations and marketing of health policies and programmes.
	● Strengthen governance and management structures and systems.
	● Strengthen oversight over public entities and other bodies.
	● Adopt Health Industry Charter.
2. Promote healthy lifestyles.	● Develop a national strategy to promote healthy lifestyles.
	● Initiate and maintain healthy lifestyles campaign.
	● Strengthen health promoting schools initiative.
	● Initiate and maintain diabetes movement.
	● Develop and implement strategies to reduce chronic diseases of lifestyle.
● Implement activities and interventions to improve key family practices that impact on child health.	
3. Contribute towards human dignity by improving quality of care.	● Strengthen community participation at all levels.
	● Improve clinical management of care at all levels of the health care delivery system.
	● Strengthen hospital accreditation system in each province in line with national norms and standards.
4. Improve management of communicable diseases and non-communicable illnesses.	● Scale up surveillance to enhance epidemic preparedness and response.
	● Improve immunisation coverage.
	● Improve the management of all children under the age of five years presenting with illnesses such as pneumonia, diarrhoea, malaria and HIV.
	● Update malaria guidelines, integrate malaria control into comprehensive communicable disease control programme and ensure reduction of cases.
	● Implement TB programme review recommendations.
	● Accelerate implementation of the Comprehensive plan for HIV and AIDS.
	● Strengthen free health care for people with disabilities.
	● Strengthen programmes on women and maternal health.
● Strengthen programmes for survivors of sexual abuse and victim empowerment.	

Priority	Key Activities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve risk assessment of non-communicable illnesses. • Improve mental health services.
5. Strengthen primary health care, EMS and hospital delivery systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen primary health care. • Implement provincial EMS plans. • Strengthen hospital services.
6. Strengthen support services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen NHLS services. • Ensure availability of blood through the South African National Blood Service. • Transfer forensic labs including mortuaries to provinces. • Implement health technology management system. • Radiation control strengthened. • Quality, safety, efficacy and affordability of medicines. • Establish an integrated disease surveillance system. • Integrate non-natural mortality surveillance into overall mortality surveillance system. • Establish an integrated food control system. • Develop a forensic service including the transfer of medico-legal mortuaries from SAPS to provincial Departments of Health.
7. Human resource planning, development and management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement plan to fast track filling of posts. • Strengthen human resource management. • Implement national human resource plan. • Strengthen implementation of the CHW programme and expand the mid-level worker programme. • Strengthen programme of action to mainstream gender.
8. Planning, budgeting and monitoring and evaluation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain Cabinet approval for Social Health Insurance policy. • Strengthen health system planning and budgeting. • Strengthen use of health information system.
9. Prepare and implement legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Mental Health Care Act. • Implement National Health Act. • Provincial Health Acts implemented. • Traditional Healers, Nursing and Risk Equalisation Fund Bills implemented.
10. Strengthen international relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen implementation of bi- and multi-lateral agreements. • Strengthen donor coordination. • Strengthen implementation of NEPAD strategy and SADC.

As noted in the previous section, specific priorities have been identified by the National Health Council for 2006/07. This is an attempt to ensure that both the National and Provincial Departments of Health focus on the same short list of priorities. These priorities reflect the issues that need to be paid attention to in order for the health system to be transformed. Hence the inclusion of service transformation plans, physical infrastructure and human resources, for example.

2.3 Conclusion

As indicated in the foregoing sections, the objectives that the Department has set itself for the period 2006/07-2008/09 for its four budget programmes derive their mandate from the various legal and political directives, as well as from the five-year strategic priorities of the NHS, and the annual priorities formulated by the NHC for 2006/07.

The next chapter presents the objectives of the Department, and illustrate their alignment to the mandates outlined above.