

## TAC Comment on Health Budget Speech

By *moderator*

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On 13 April 2010 Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi delivered his budget speech in Parliament. He reiterated the efforts that the Department of Health is undertaking to improve health outcomes and meet the targets of the HIV/AIDS & STIs National Strategic Plan (2007-2011) in line with carrying out its 10 point plan to transform the health sector. He also committed South Africa to purchasing the lowest-price antiretroviral (ARV) medicines. This is a challenge to local companies to price their ARVs more competitively.

Motsoaledi outlined the shocking health outcomes we are facing as a country. South African healthcare is in crisis. Years of AIDS denialism and neglected health structures have put us where we are today. Poor outcomes include reduced life expectancy and increased maternal and child mortality.

In response to this, the Ministry of Health has positioned itself to make real change. Motsoaledi has recognized the barriers to improving outcomes, including the lack of access and integration of healthcare services; degraded healthcare facilities and infrastructure; human resource shortages and poor management and healthcare financing.

To implement improved health policies successfully, the need for community advocacy and mobilization is as great as ever, particularly in under-served and remote areas. TAC has positioned itself to respond to this challenge.

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