

Heala condemns Finance Minister's failure to increase Health Promotion Levy

The Healthy Living Alliance (Heala) expresses profound disappointment in Finance Minister Enoch Gondwana's omission to announce an elevation of the Health Promotion Levy (HPL).



Source: [Pexels](#)

Despite years of anticipation, the National Treasury has continuously neglected to augment the HPL, a levy integral not only to fiscal contributions but also to curtailing the consumption of sugary beverages.

Recognised as a crucial instrument in South Africa's battle against life-threatening non-communicable diseases, the absence of this increase underscores a significant setback in public health efforts.

Ordinary South Africans bear the burden of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and cancer.

"Researchers have alerted us of the dangers of a high NCD burden. One study warns that "the implications for the current situation are widespread: a future population with deteriorated physical and mental health, presenting with co-morbidities that render these individuals more susceptible to infectious diseases".

"Treasury's continued failure to act to protect ordinary South Africans against industry interest shows its lack of commitment to stopping and reversing the tsunami of non-communicable diseases in South Africa," Heala said in a media statement.

"The Finance minister has once again failed South Africans by refusing to increase the HPL to 20% or at least announce implementation of annual inflation-related increases of this lifesaving intervention that has been shown to work," it added.

Heala believes that the government is doing a disservice to any efforts to curtail the avalanche of NCDs in the country by allowing the sugar industry to use the HPL as a scapegoat for its ongoing failure.

We will continue to hold Treasury accountable in implementing pro-people policies that put people's health at the forefront, said.