



Bhekisisa Centre for Health Journalism

5 August 2024

C/O Christina Pitt

**RE: BHEKISISA MEDIA QUERY**

**1. What is the duration of the Aspen/Novo Nordisk human insulin contract? And how exactly will this secure Africa's human insulin supply?**

Continuity of supply for the patients of South Africa and across the African continent is a priority for Novo Nordisk. This expansion will allow us to improve access to insulin as needed, based on the increase we are seeing in the diagnosis of diabetes. Locally, this also helps us to retain and grow skills whilst also leveraging our own manufacturing capabilities. Our partnership agreement with Aspen is an evergreen contract meaning that it is ongoing.

Through this new partnership we aim to ensure more equitable access to lifesaving care to people with diabetes by expanding access to insulin to over 1 million people across the African continent by 2026.

**2. What exactly does fill-and-finish entail? How much control does Aspen have over the manufacturing process?**

The Active Pharmaceutical Ingredient (API) is manufactured in Kalundborg, Denmark. The Active Pharmaceutical Ingredient and other excipients will be supplied to Aspen - in a similar way as done for all other Novo Nordisk manufacturing sites. Aspen will then do the formulation of Novo Nordisk insulin, the filling of insulin into vials, the visual inspection and the packaging of the vials.

**3. What is the reasoning for only contracting for human insulin in vials and not pens? Does Aspen not have the capacity to make pens?**

Aspen had excess capacity on an existing vaccines vial line that Aspen will repurpose to produce insulin. Our priority is to ensure an expanded and secure supply of insulin to South Africa and the African continent.

**4. Does Novo Nordisk plan on concluding manufacturing and licensing deals with more local manufacturers in the future?**

The current focus is the recently announced partnership with Aspen SA Operations (Pty) Ltd and Aspen Pharmacare Holdings Limited (Aspen) to step up the existing supply of affordable human insulin. This partnership will help improve security of supply for South Africa and the rest of the continent.

Kind Regards,

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