



Ref: PMB code of conduct; RPL
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Industry agrees on code of conduct; you are still protected

Regulator of medical schemes, the Council for Medical Schemes (CMS), would like to share its views on two recent developments in the industry: the new code of conduct as far as essential healthcare benefits are concerned, and the ruling declaring the Reference Price List (RPL) invalid.

PMB code of conduct: industry agrees on way forward

The industry task team on prescribed minimum benefits (PMBs), lead by the CMS, has concluded months of work by agreeing on a code of conduct in respect of PMBs: a package of essential healthcare benefits which schemes must provide to their beneficiaries.

The code is aimed at helping medical schemes comply with PMB provisions in the Medical Schemes Act (Act 131 of 1998) and obviating the need for regulatory intervention.

Healthcare funders and administrators, service providers, consumer groups and beneficiaries as well as regulatory bodies such as the CMS and the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) were represented on the task team.

The task team has resolved a number of issues and stakeholders have expressed confidence in the process that was followed. We are confident that strategic solutions to the few outstanding issues will be found soon, including on the “payment in full” provisions in the Medical Schemes Act. The Registrar of Medical Schemes is committed to an ongoing process and further consultation with affected parties.

RPL judgement: beneficiaries are safe

If you belong to a medical scheme, know that your benefits are safe – and that you remain protected.

The recent High Court ruling declaring the Reference Price List (RPL) null and void does not affect the rules of medical schemes currently in place. The RPL served only as a guideline for the level at which schemes reimbursed service providers.

The CMS is, however, taking this and related strategic matters up with the Minister of Health. Our mandate obliges us to advise him on matters of health policy, including the absence of any interim or ultimate framework which would enable multilateral tariff negotiations to determine provider prices.

A statutory body established in terms of the
Medical Schemes Act, 1998 (Act 131 of 1998)

Chairperson: Prof. W Pick Registrar & CE: Dr M Gantsho