



Ref: Gazetting of the Bipolar Mood Disorder
Algorithm

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GAZETTING OF THE BIPOLAR MOOD DISORDERS (BMD) THERAPEUTIC ALGORITHM.

The Council for Medical Schemes (CMS) is pleased to announce that the Minister of Health has published a therapeutic algorithm for the management of Bipolar Mood Disorder (BMD). This algorithm specifies the diagnosis, medical management and medication for this debilitating disorder. The publication of the algorithm in the Government Gazette of 21 December 2009 means that registered medical schemes are now obliged to fund treatment for this condition in accordance with the algorithm.

BMD affects both sexes equally and is prevalent between the ages of 30-40 years, but can occur and be diagnosed in any other age group. Patients present with extreme mood swings which can alter the quality of life. According to the December 2008 returns, approximately 11 000 beneficiaries were known to be treated for this disorder.

Before the publication of this algorithm, some members treated for this disorder were not being covered by their medical schemes.

The development of the published algorithm was lead by the Department of Health and followed a broad consultative and participative approach with industry stakeholders, service providers and academics.

The process involved the review of other prescribed minimum benefits and the PMB review steering committee is preparing recommendations, which will be made to the Minister of Health in 2010.

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