

July 2020

Dear Doctor

PMG MEMBERSHIP

1. Background

Paediatrician Management Group (RF) NPC (PMG) is a Non Profit company 100% owned and managed by Paediatricians for the benefit of Paediatricians, especially over private practice issues. The website address is www.paediatrician.co.za.

PMG needs to be strengthened by increased membership support to deal with the ever increasing demand placed on Paediatricians by government regarding the role of private practice in South Africa, the role of private practice in the proposed National Health Insurance (NHI) System, the shortage of doctors, the salaries of specialists in the public sector, the income of specialists in the private sector, the role of medical schemes, and other important matters such as regulatory reforms by the National Department of Health (NDoH).

The cost to the individual Paediatricians in private practice who manage PMG and have to represent Paediatricians in private practice on these issues is also too high to absorb within their own practice costs. Other organisations like Health Management & Networking Services (Pty) Ltd (HealthMan) has therefore been contracted for many years to do a large portion of the work as professionals are needed to represent our interests at a high level.

HealthMan is a privately owned healthcare consultancy specialising in the management and administration of specialist and other provider healthcare networks. Their concentrated focus is on promoting the professional and commercial interests of both specialist networks and other allied healthcare practitioners and have extensive industry experience, and quality service and industry contacts.

There have been huge successes in the joint effort between SAPA and PMG including several increases in the fees of Paediatricians in private practice as well as the establishment of new codes that have enhanced private practice revenue.

2. The immediate projects that PMG focus on:

1. Strengthening the organisation, representative of Paediatricians in private practice and also representing Paediatricians in the Public Sector with limited private practice.

Directors:

Pearl Gwamanda, Yatish Kara, Omolemo Kitchin (Chairman), Fiona Kritzinger, Rabeen Lutchman, Simon Strachan, Buhle Toba, Monica Vaithilingum, Ashley Wewege

2. PMG together with the South African Private Practitioners Forum (SAPPF) and other specialist management companies will continue to strive to improve the remuneration for members and the establishment of a cost based tariff.
3. PMG together with SAPPF and other management companies will oppose the Board of Healthcare Funders' attempt to reduce the value of PMB's to a scheme rate and not the doctor's invoice value.
4. PMG will continue to work closely with medical schemes on all matters pertaining to Paediatricians.
5. Improving communications and website offerings dealing with private practice issues through the PMG website.
6. Establishing a range of practice advisory services through the offices of HealthMan.
7. Commercial offerings such as credit card terminals, asset finance, PPS reviews and CPD points logging through the assistance of HealthMan and the PMG website.
8. The consolidation of paediatric claims data to negotiate paediatric coding and tariffs with Medical Schemes and the Department of Health.
9. Discussing and negotiating Paediatric Benefit Design with the various medical schemes and managed care organisations.
10. Review and update of paediatric coding system for incorporation into a new coding system for South Africa. This project will be done in conjunction with SACHI (South African Classification of Healthcare Interventions), SAPPF and the South African Medical Association (SAMA).
11. PMG together with SAPPF and other specialist management companies will continue to engage with Government on all healthcare matters relating to NHI and envisaged by the National Health Act and the Medical Schemes Act.
12. PMG will continue to update procedural coding reforms relevant to Paediatrics and to meet with Funders in this regard.

3. **In addition to the projects listed above, the following value add services are available at no additional costs, except if stated so and they are part of the monthly membership fee:**

- Free online **SMS** service for patient communications – PMG website.
- HealthMan has an agreement with ABSA bank for reduced rates on credit card terminals in your practice. Please contact the PMG offices at 011 340 9000 for further information.
- **PSG** Northcliff, a preferred provider of the HealthMan Group, will review and advise on employee benefits, personal investments, life and key man policies and wealth preservation.
- **PPS** reviews and analysis by a **PSG** consultant. Note that changes to PPS structures, requires that your portfolios be reviewed on a regular basis.
- Online access to obtain CPD points, as well as online access to view your CPD points.
- **Practice advisory services** to assist with medical schemes problems, i.e., non-payment, reversals, PMB's etc., through the HealthMan office.
- **Helpdesk** to assist with general medical schemes queries.
- **Helpdesk** to assist with Consumer Protection Act complaints and queries.
- Various **consulting services** through HealthMan offices.
- Receipt of regular communications relevant to the healthcare industry.
- Annual Salary Review for specialist practices
- Access to participation in the **Paediatric Governance Project (PGP)** with Discovery which allows all registered PGP providers to receive an additional 2% higher reimbursement for consultations as well as benefit from existing project incentives.
- Annual Comparative Tariff Schedule for major medical schemes.
- Access to the **Profmed Alternative Reimbursement Model**.

4. **The PMG business model:**

- **PMG** employs the services of two existing organisations **HealthMan (Pty) Ltd** on a contractual basis to advise on and manage all routine operational tasks, as well as providing PMG with additional services where required.
- Members of PMG are automatically members of SAPPF.
- The Board of Directors comprise of practising Paediatricians that have been nominated and duly elected at an Annual General Meeting.
- The Board out-sources all operational issues at a predetermined cost; these costs are fixed for twelve months and are renegotiated on an annual basis. This cost is at a substantial discount to competitors in the market with a much-advanced service offering to that of competitors.
- The advantage of this business model is that PMG does not have to invest money or resources in staff, premises and equipment, and therefore operates as a 'virtual' organisation.
- An annual general meeting is usually held during one of the PMG conferences.

5. Internal Communication:

- Communication is via email, fax, sms messages, telegram and the PMG website.
- Members will receive HealthView newsletters updating them on industry news monthly. The Private Practice Review newsletter will regularly update them on news pertaining to their practice i.e. codes, legislation, tariffs, etc.
- Member meetings will happen on request from the various regions at which matters of importance to private practice will be discussed. There are usually journal club meetings sponsored by the Trade Industry. Member meetings have also been held regularly during weekend conferences and now, during the COVID-19 period, Zoom meetings and Webinars will be held for the benefit and continued education of members.

6. HealthMan Overview

HealthMan is a privately owned healthcare consultancy specialising in the management and administration of specialist and healthcare networks. Their concentrated focus on promoting the professional and commercial interests of both specialist networks and healthcare practitioners, coupled with their extensive industry experience, quality service and industry contacts, make them the preferred choice in healthcare consulting.

HealthMan commenced business in 1996 and since inception has focused exclusively on consulting to private practice. Their areas of expertise include network administration, legal support, healthcare research, financial modelling and the development of tariff schedules. HealthMan consultants play pivotal communication, representation and negotiation roles in their relations with key healthcare industry stakeholders: Networks, Funders (i.e. Medical Schemes and Managed Healthcare Organizations), Professional Associations, Hospitals, Pharmaceutical Companies and Suppliers.

It is for the foregoing reasons that PMG has for many years contracted HealthMan as consultants and outsourced agents to support PMG with the ever increasing healthcare demands placed on PMG.

7. HealthMan Client Base:

HealthMan has been consulting to Private Practice for the past 22 years and their clients include:

- Clinical Psychology Forum (CPF)
 - ENT Society and Management Group (ENTMG & Society)
 - Faculty of Consulting Physicians of SA (FCPSA)
 - Psychiatry Management Group Ltd (PsychMG)
 - The Association of Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgeons of Southern Africa (APRASSA)
 - Society for Endocrinology, Metabolism & Diabetes of SA (SEMDSA)
-

- General Practitioner Management Group Ltd (GPMG)
- Gynaecology Management Group Ltd (GMG) & (SASOG)
- Iso Leso Optics Ltd (Network of optometrists)
- Namibian Private Practice Forum (NPPF)
- Neurology Association of South Africa (NASA)
- Ophthalmology Management Group Ltd (OMG) & (OSSA)
- Paediatrician Management Group Ltd (PMG)
- Society of Radiographers of South Africa (SORSA)
- South African Audiology Association (SAAA)
- South African Private Practitioners Forum (SAPPF)
- South African Society of Physiotherapy (SASP)
- South African Society of Psychiatrists (SASOP)
- South African Rheumatism & Arthritis Association (SARAA)
- Surgicom Ltd

HealthMan was also responsible for **NHRPL 2009 submissions** for virtually **all SAMA disciplines** and has done most of the research work and support for the various legal challenges that have happened or are in progress.

HealthMan was also responsible for **NHRPL 2009 submissions** for virtually **all SAMA disciplines** and has done most of the research work and support for the various legal challenges that have happened or are in progress.

8. Discovery Health

Discovery is by far the largest Funder in South Africa and it therefore makes sense to negotiate with them for better remuneration. We believe that the way forward during these times of grave uncertainty especially as the DoH fumbled with the RPL 2009 and the talk of a National Health system gets stronger, is to deal directly with the Funders. It was this philosophy that led to the Governance project.

The Governance project allows for participating doctors to benefit from:

- Better remuneration for code 0111
- The ability to charge code 0019
- The benefit of peer review of your practice admission data

Participation in this project is voluntary and the project aims to promote high quality cost effective to Paediatric Practice. The first part of the project is to ensure appropriate admission. Practices and participating doctors give consent for their practice admission data to be monitored. If the admission rates fall well outside of the norm then the PMG Exco contacts the particular practice so that constructive debate can be entered into to understand the admission policies of the practice. This project is in its fourth year and the benefits have already been evident in Discovery allowing code 0019 and code 0149 (after hours fee for work between 21h00 and 06h00).

After negotiations instigated by PMG, Discovery is actively looking at tiered consultations for sub specialties and the possibility that vaccines become part of the basic Funder risk package is under review at the moment. The possibility that doctors participating in the governance project become the designated service providers for Discovery is also under discussion.

It is important to understand that the Governance project and PMG have nothing at all to do with the payment agreement options such as Premier A, Premier B, Classic Direct and Executive. Participation in these payment options is your own decision and this will be guided by the demographics of your practice. Only the Classic direct option gives remuneration close to that suggested by the Practice Cost Study data.

9. Vermont Oxford Network (VON)

VON is an International accepted and acclaimed neonatal database. The Mediclinic hospitals in South Africa have been part of this for many years and PMG has secured a special rate for South Africa. Any Hospital in South Africa

can have their neonatal intensive care linked to this system through the agreement. A steering committee is responsible for assessing the South African data and for putting forward guidelines to achieve the best neonatal care possible. The data submitted to VON is confidential and will only be available to the VON committee grouped together as data from South Africa. Each unit is encouraged to view their own data and to liaise with the committee if help is required to correct any irregularities or to assist with clinical best practice. Netcare has been very proactive in enlisting their neonatal ICUs and Life Health care Hospitals will receive full support from Life, but it is the onus of the doctors in the units to approach their hospital manager and initiate the process.

10. SA PVAC

The South African Paediatric Vaccine Action Group was established to design a uniform Paediatric vaccine schedule for use by all doctors and clinic sisters in the private sector. This schedule is reviewed annually and thereafter distributed to all PMG members. The committee has representatives from academia, SAPA and PMG. The Group constantly engages with pharmaceutical companies to try and establish a code of best practice and to campaign for the inclusion of all the new vaccines into the EPI. It will also endeavour to convince Medical healthcare Funders to pay for all vaccines

11. South African Private Practitioners Forum (SAPPF)

The South African Private Practitioners Forum (SAPPF) is a non-profit body constituted to uphold and promote the practice and professional interests of medical specialists and allied healthcare professionals in the South African private healthcare sector. SAPPF represents approximately 8 500 practitioners from most specialised medical disciplines, optometrists, physiotherapists and General Practitioners including, but not limited to, the specialist physicians, nephrologists, endocrinologists, rheumatologists, paediatricians, general surgeons, ENT surgeons, psychiatrists, respiratory physicians, and hepatologists. In addition, SAPPF holds a mandate to make submissions on behalf of the IPA Foundation of South Africa which represents 3,500 GPs.

SAPPF is the preferred voice of private practice in South Africa for most specialists and has been an active stakeholder in the debates and negotiations pertinent to legislative and regulatory interventions into healthcare.

SAPPF and SAMA have signed a Memorandum of Understanding, in which it was agreed to work together on matters relating to private practice and the update of the South African doctor's coding.

12. South African Coding System

The SAPPF is in the process of drafting a new National Procedural Coding Structure of international standards. It is important that the Medical Profession determines its scope of practice and therefore remain in control of any changes to the current coding system or any proposed new system. The ICD10PCS proposed by DoH is not appropriate for South Africa and is not in use anywhere else in the world.

It was also proposed by DoH that the ICD10PCS coding system must be researched and developed by the private sector at its own costs. Thereafter ownership must be handed over to DoH. This position is not acceptable to SAPPF and SAPPF will continue its efforts to introduce a new South African system. The coding committee is chaired by Dr Eugene Allers, a Gauteng psychiatrist.

The coding initiative will be co-ordinated by an independent entity established for this purpose. South African Classification of Healthcare Interventions (SACHI) will become the custodian of coding and will be inclusive of all medical disciplines in South Africa.

13. COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The **COVID-19 Pandemic** is threatening to sweep through our community and cause untold misery. This is the time for bravery and responsibility. This is the time to look to each other for guidance and support. Both PMG and SAPPF have taken on this challenge and have involved themselves in the operations of the hospitals in which their members work. They are continuously investigating mechanisms to assist doctors in meeting the financial challenges that are facing them.

PMG members will regularly be updated on progress and developments that are being made on several fronts.

If you have not yet joined PMG kindly complete the membership application and ACB (debit order) authorisation forms and email hillary@healthman.co.za.

We trust that this document clarifies the roles played by the various professional organisations that look after your interests in an ever-changing healthcare environment. Should you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.