

MEDIBRIEF

JULY 2022

New verification process when you call the Call Centre

We are lucky to have a dedicated call centre team. Our call centre consultants are very passionate about servicing AMS members and make it their business to get to know our members, but they still need to confirm that you are the true caller. Increased fraud and identity theft cases, as well as tightened legislation to protect your personal information, make it a necessity for us to improve our identity verification process. For this reason, we introduced a new verification tool in July to confirm your identity before proceeding with the call. In the past, our call centre consultants were tasked to ask you security questions. For a more efficient process, we will now ask you to enter a One-Time-Pin (OTP) instead. If you chose this option, have your mobile phone handy. The system first confirms the last four digits of your cell phone number before sending the OTP. If the number is not correct, you don't have your phone with you or prefer not to choose this way of verifying, don't worry, you can still select the previous process for verification.

Please ensure we have your current contact details

As you might know, we recently carried out a communications survey. To those members that have participated – thank you for helping us understand your preferences in receiving Scheme communication. The survey was anonymous; however, if you left a comment and your membership number, the Scheme will review and respond in due time. Should you need a more immediate response, email member@angloms.co.za for assistance. We will report back on the outcome of the survey in a future MediBrief edition but would like to share with you one observation today. We emailed the survey to all members that provided us with an email address. Unfortunately, we cannot post surveys due to the inefficiencies of the postal system. However, because we felt it important to include and represent all members – also those without email addresses – we selected a random group of members and tried to call them. We were only able to reach 18% of these members, after multiple attempts. This is worrying as we wonder if we still have your current telephone number and whether we would be able to reach you in a more urgent matter. According to the Scheme Rules, it is your responsibility to keep your contact details up to date with the Scheme. If you do have an email address that we can use to communicate with you, please make it available to us. In our experience, this is the most reliable and efficient way to communicate today.

Catch up on your cancer screening

We reported in previous articles that many members did not keep up with their normal healthcare routine during the pandemic. This is not unique to Anglo Medical Scheme, but unfortunately a global trend. For cancer screening this is particularly problematic as it is so important to catch cancer as early as possible. A missed screening can mean a missed opportunity to start treatment early enough for the best possible outcome.

In the case of breast cancer, South African specialists noticed a worrying trend.

The Chief Operations Officer at the Breast Health Foundation, Louise Turner, shares her observations, saying "Breast cancer is

one of the most common cancers in women worldwide. In fact, in South Africa, the prevalence is high, with 1 in 28 women at risk of breast cancer. We saw women presenting with severe and advanced breast cancers in 2021, due to the lack of cancer screening in 2020. All in all, early detection saves lives."

We all know the reasons why we didn't keep up with our screening during the pandemic. Some facilities were not accessible during lockdown, some were under immense pressure or we were worried about exposure to Covid-19 at healthcare facilities. Luckily, these factors have changed. If you have not caught up on your screening yet – now is the time to get back to a healthy screening routine. Don't give cancer a chance to sneak in undetected.

Please discuss your individual screening needs with your healthcare provider who will consider your family history or other risk factors that might influence the recommended screening frequency for you. Below are some general recommendations.

Breast cancer screening benefits

A mammogram is usually recommended every two years. It uses low-dose X-rays to create pictures of the breast. Doctors use a mammogram to look for early signs of breast cancer. A breast ultrasound uses high-frequency sound waves on the breast and converts them into images. To access your mammogram benefits, don't forget to get a referral from your doctor and authorisation.

Cervical cancer screening

Pap smears are usually recommended every three years, unless you have certain risk factors. They detect abnormal cells in the cervix before they lead to cervical cancer. Screening can prevent most cervical cancers by finding abnormal cells (pre-cancerous) so that they can be treated before they have a chance to turn into cervical cancer.

Colorectal cancer screening

For beneficiaries over 50 years of age, stool-based tests for cancer screening are paid for from the out of hospital pathology benefit on the Standard Care Plan, and from risk (the Scheme) on the Managed Care Plan.

A colonoscopy might be recommended for those at high risk of developing this cancer such as those with a strong family history of colorectal cancer or living with medical conditions that

increase the risk of colorectal cancer. On both Standard Care Plan and Managed Care Plan colonoscopies, like other scopes, need to be performed in a day clinic or accredited network facility to avoid a co-payment of R3 200, unless it is an emergency.

Prostate screening

Prostate screening can include a blood test (PSA) and an examination. One PSA test per year is paid by the Scheme, the consultation falls under your out of hospital benefits on the SCP and is paid from your MSA on the MCP.

Skin cancer

Our skin changes as we age and not all moles or growths are problematic; however, considering the frequency of skin cancer in South Africa we can't take a chance. We need to educate ourselves about the warning signs for skin cancer (search for the article "Be skin and sun smart" on our website) and act if we see worrying changes. The GP can be the first port of call and, if necessary, will refer you for further screening or specialists.

Members of the Value Care Plan, please discuss cancer screening with your network provider who will guide you through the Prime Cure protocols and benefits for screening that are available to you.

Learn more about the Scheme benefits for preventative care and screenings available to you and your family in your Benefit Guide.

Sources: cansa.org.za; *Discovery Health*

Were your chronic condition benefits 'terminated'?

If you have received a letter advising you of the termination of your chronic condition benefits, it is because you have not claimed for medication for this condition over a specific period of time. The authorisation for your chronic benefits can only stay active if you use the benefits and take your medicine regularly. Depending on your previously registered chronic condition you might also have had access to a 'treatment basket', which would have included benefits for consultations and possible tests, such as, X-rays, blood tests, etc., to monitor your registered chronic condition. These would have been paid out of this dedicated benefit and not from your out of hospital benefits on the Standard Care Plan or from your medical savings account on the Managed Care Plan. If you received the letter informing you of the termination of your chronic condition benefits, you won't have access to these associated benefits any longer. Should you now need to continue the treatment, please phone 0860 222 633 to re-register.

Our medicine management team will look at the requirements and entry criteria and advise accordingly.

The importance of taking chronic medication continuously

- Taking your medicine as prescribed is important to control chronic conditions and to achieve overall long-term health and wellbeing.
- Not taking your medication as prescribed can lead to your condition getting worse, hospitalisation or in some cases even death.
- To stop medication as prescribed might be dangerous. You might be feeling better, but the medication has been designed to improve your health and condition over a longer period or for the rest of your life. Please consult with your doctor before you stop taking your medication.

Do you have further questions on the articles in this edition? Contact us on the numbers and addresses listed here:

Visit www.angloms.co.za to learn more about your Scheme and benefits.

Find all previous MediBrief editions in the Info Centre > Knowledge Library.

Member Queries:

Value Care Plan: 0861 665 665, anglo@primecure.co.za

Standard and Managed Care Plan: 0860 222 633, member@angloms.co.za

Claims: claims@angloms.co.za