

2024 benefits and contributions

Factors determining benefit and contribution changes

In the assessment of the annual contribution and benefit changes, numerous factors are taken into consideration. The objective is to balance the Scheme's long-term sustainability against making funds available for benefits that will adequately cover our members' healthcare needs while keeping contributions affordable. As members age and require more medical treatment, technology and medicine continue to advance and healthcare professionals become scarcer, the costs of claims increase. Our actuaries analyse these risk factors, along with the financial and demographic trends, and determine the expected level of reserving required to fund future claims. In consideration of our members' needs, the Trustees then make changes to the benefits and utilise funds from the reserves to ensure that the contribution increases remain acceptable, but within the actuarially determined reserving level.

AMS's distinct advantage

While contribution increases are unavoidable, in good financial years AMS generates more income from the invested reserves, which is used to improve benefits and keep contributions lower. In poor financial years, due to the 'healthy' reserves, AMS can soften increases or potential benefit reductions more effectively than other schemes with much lower levels of reserves. Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic and the global financial crisis, our investments delivered better than expected in 2023.

Better benefits for lower contributions

To ensure that we offer benefits as good or better than the industry average, our Trustees constantly monitor market and industry trends and benchmark our plans against those of other schemes. Comparing benefits across the industry is a complex task as no two plans offer the same benefits or have the same network arrangements, medical savings account structures or limitations.

In 2023, both our independent consulting actuaries and the Scheme's administration actuaries conducted a comprehensive benchmarking exercise. The outcome of this exercise showed that all AMS plans ranked among the top 3 in their respective categories. Notably, both actuarial reports reaffirmed AMS's competitive pricing, with contribution rates significantly lower than those of comparable options. Furthermore, our plans offer more generous benefits, providing more value for every rand spent.

Given our Scheme's robust standing, the Trustees agreed to maintain contribution increases at the lower end of the market expectation and to improve benefits to a total projected value of +/- R600 million for 2024.

Benefit improvements for 2024

Benefit limits and Scheme Reimbursement Rates were, on average, increased by 5.5% across all plans.

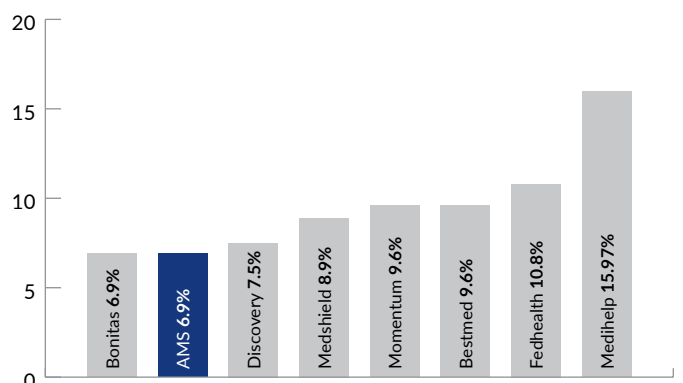
We are pleased to announce that, from 2024, Value Care Plan members will have access to unlimited virtual GP consultations at Dis-Chem clinics when clinically appropriate. The dental benefit has also been improved, allowing families to obtain two sets of dentures every three years and denture repairs six months after issue. Additionally, the contribution increase has been kept 1% lower than the increase on the other two Plans.

Good news for Standard Care Plan members: the already comprehensive dental benefit, as confirmed by the Dental Risk Company, our administrator and the benchmarking exercise, has been further enriched with the addition of one panoramic radiograph per beneficiary every three years. The Additional Basic and Specialised Dentistry Benefit limit was increased by 17.2%, and not by the overall increase of 5.5%. Members diagnosed with Myasthenia Gravis will receive funding for their medication from the non-PMB Chronic Medicine Benefit in 2024.

Managed Care Plan members will benefit from a 14.9% increase in the conservative and advanced dentistry limit, paid by the Scheme, not from their Medical Savings Account (MSA). Moreover, a new basic optometry benefit funded by the Scheme has been introduced, over and above their MSA availability. With these two benefit improvements, members will be able to use their MSA to fund other benefit categories.

After considering member, employer and Scheme funding requirements, the average 2024 AMS contribution increase was agreed at 6.9%, at the lower end of the market as seen below.

Top 7 open scheme average contribution increases as available at the time of publishing:



continues >>

2024 contributions

Percentage increase	Main member	Adult dependant	Child dependant	Difference in rands to 2023
Value Care Plan (6%)	R1 230	R1 230	R300	R70 / R15
Standard Care Plan (7%)	R3 445	R3 445	R1 035	R225 / R70
Managed Care Plan (7%)	R6 295	R6 295	R1 455	R410 / R95

Please note: The 2024 benefit and contribution changes are, as always, subject to the approval of the Council for Medical Schemes.

Change in distribution of the Benefit Guide

The Scheme is transitioning to electronic distribution of the Benefit Guide. Printing costs have increased dramatically during the last couple of years and, considering the challenges the South African postal service is facing, there is no guarantee that a printed Benefit Guide will reliably reach our members. This decision was taken in line with industry standards and evolving communication trends. If you still receive your statements and this MediBrief by post, we will post a printed Benefit Guide to you. If you receive them via email, we trust that accessing information on our website will be convenient for you, and we will email you the link to the Benefit Guide. You will also find it on www.angloms.co.za > Plans & Benefits > Benefit Guide.



Introducing Ask AMS – two new tools to chat to us!

The 'Ask AMS' website chat

Look for the blue icon at the bottom right of the Scheme's website. Our 24/7 automated chatbot answers FAQs, such as 'how do I submit a claim' or 'how do I get pre-authorization'. Register and log in for personalised answers to your membership and plan. If you don't get answers from the bot, you can also ask to 'chat to a person' and you will be connected to one of our Call Centre agents. May we introduce you to the people behind the live chat? Nomonde, Grant and Ayesha (with the team leader Darin in the front) are looking forward to assisting you.

Ask AMS on WhatsApp

If you prefer, you can also use WhatsApp, which will work the same way as described above. You will start your conversation with the chatbot and from there you can ask to 'chat to someone'. Save 'Ask AMS' on 011 292 8797 to your contacts and start a chat in WhatsApp.

Value Care Plan app

We are excited to announce the launch of the Value Care Plan app. Access your membership card, find and select doctors on the Prime Cure network, locate application forms, request an authorisation, and so much more.

Here's what one of our first app testers had to say: "I am incredibly impressed. This app has made navigating my plan so much simpler. Now everything is within my control. I used to have to call for authorisations or information, and it was frustrating when my airtime ran out during the call.

Now, I can manage all these tasks in the app before my doctor's visit. I also appreciate the personalisation. This app truly caters to me, and I feel valued as an AMS member".

Search for 'Value Care Plan' on the App Store (iOS) or Google Play Store (Android), download the app and register your new app user account today.



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

Value Care Plan: 0861 665 665 | anglo@primecure.co.za | Standard and Managed Care Plans: 0860 222 633 | member@angloms.co.za and claims@angloms.co.za

Visit www.angloms.co.za to learn more about your Scheme and benefits. Log in and find all previous MediBrief editions under My Documents > Knowledge Library