



A MESSAGE FROM THE SCHEME



**Dear Medshield Member,
MAXIMISING YOUR MEDICAL BENEFITS
FOR A HEALTHY YEAR AHEAD.**

We recommend you take advantage of your medical benefits to ensure you receive the best care throughout the year. Regular check-ups, preventive screenings, and early intervention are not only good intentions, but they are also essential practices that can help you maximise your benefits throughout the year. By proactively managing your health, you ensure your well-being and boost the value of your medical plan.

To make the most of your healthcare plan, it is vital to use Designated Service Providers (DSPs) to avoid any extra costs that may be charged for using a non-DSP. It is essential to understand the details of your plan, including the costs covered for Over-the-Counter (OTC) medication, to avoid any hidden expenses. Additionally, consider

scheduling virtual consultations whenever possible, as this saves on Day-to-Day or medical Savings and reduces travel costs. By staying informed, using DSPs, and embracing virtual consultations, you can contribute to a more cost-effective and efficient healthcare experience.

REVISITING THE CONTINUUM OF CARE: A HOLISTIC APPROACH

In the previous issue of MQ News, we introduced Medshield's Continuum of Care, a holistic approach that caters to diverse healthcare requirements throughout one's life journey. This approach connects preventative and primary care to specialised treatments, hospitalisation, rehabilitation, and long-term care under the guidance of our Family Practitioners. Medshield's Continuum of Care aims to reduce gaps in patient care, minimise readmission risks, and improve the overall healthcare experience.

Medshield's Care Coordination strategy empowers Family Practitioners to navigate

and utilise our full spectrum of services effectively. By streamlining care delivery, preventing redundancies and minimising errors, we aim to reduce the burden on you and your families, ensuring you receive the proper treatment at the right stage of your care journey.

In this edition of MQ News, we explore our service offerings in detail, including the latest technologies such as SmartCare telemedicine and others. We aim to make your healthcare experience more efficient, accessible and member-centric. Working closely with family practitioners is crucial to our mission of providing high-quality and coordinated care.

Thank you for choosing Medshield as your healthcare partner. We look forward to another year of prioritising your health, delivering high-quality care, and building a community that values well-being.

Healthy regards,
Medshield Medical Scheme

SPORTS DRINKS CAN HARM YOUR TEETH



Sports drinks might be associated with the healthy lifestyle of high-performance athletes, but research has shown that it can be bad for your teeth if you drink these beverages regularly.

The purpose of sports drinks is to rehydrate athletes and to replace electrolytes during or after strenuous exercise. Unfortunately, the high sugar content and acidic nature of sports drinks can lead to tooth decay, enamel erosion, and overall oral health issues:

- Sugar helps harmful bacteria grow in your mouth, leading to plaque, which can cause cavities.
- The high citric acid content in sports drinks can also wear away the protective enamel layer of your teeth, making them more sensitive and susceptible to damage.

LIMIT SPORTS DRINKS

Water is the best choice for staying hydrated most of the time because it does not have sugar or acid.

To protect your teeth, it is important to limit how much sports drinks you have, especially when you are not doing intense physical activity. Instead of sipping on sports drinks over a period, it is better to consume them in one sitting and then rinse your mouth with water to help neutralise the acidic environment.

Choosing sugar-free or low-sugar sports drink options can also reduce the risk to oral health.

HEALTHY HABITS

Follow these habits to keep your smile healthy while enjoying an active lifestyle:

- Brush your teeth with a small, soft-bristled toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste for two minutes, at least twice a day, i.e., every morning and every night.
- Floss every day to clean between your teeth (once daily, or at least 4 times/week).
- Make it a habit to rinse your mouth with water after every meal or drink.
- Avoid sweets, sugary foods and sugar-filled drinks (if you do eat these, limit them to mealtimes). Read nutritional content on food labels. Have 25 g (6 teaspoons) or less of sugar every day.
- Smoking makes gum disease worse. If you smoke, try to quit. If you are finding it difficult to quit smoking, reduce the number of cigarettes you smoke to start off with.
- Visit a dental healthcare professional at least once a year for routine checkups, or more often if your dentist says you need it.

Source:

- Noble, W.H., Donovan, T.E. and Geissberger, M. (2011). Sports drinks and dental erosion. *Journal of the California Dental Association*, [online] 39(4), pp.233–238. Available at: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/21675676/>.

REVITALISE YOUR LIFESTYLE

Unveiling a Healthier You



It is easy to overlook the small details that shape our daily routines in the fast-paced modern lifestyle. However, we invite you to pause and join us in reflecting, rejuvenating, and revitalising our lives.

MINDFUL NUTRITION – A CULINARY EXPLORATION

Kickstart your journey of self-discovery by exploring the choices you make when it comes to your diet. Lifestyle Awareness Month encourages us to be conscious of what we eat. Adding fresh, whole foods to your daily meals will give your body the nourishment it needs to function correctly. Even small changes in your eating habits can significantly impact your overall health and wellbeing.

ACTIVE LIVING – DANCING TO THE RHYTHM OF WELLBEING

Join #MedshieldMovement and embrace an active lifestyle! Put on our sneakers and get moving. Whether it's a daily walk, a workout routine, or a new sport, find an activity that brings joy to your day. Let the rhythm of wellbeing guide your steps towards improved mood and mental well-being. Remember, movement is medicine!

MINDFULNESS PRACTICES – FINDING SERENITY IN THE CHAOS

In our busy daily routines, finding moments to stop and take a deep

breath is crucial. Practising mindfulness through techniques like meditation, deep breathing exercises, and yoga can help reduce stress and enhance focus. Dedicate a few minutes daily to reconnect with yourself and promote a calmer, more-centered mindset.

EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING – CULTIVATING THE GARDEN OF INNER PEACE

Amidst the external chaos, remember to take care of the garden within. It is important to remember that your mental health is as significant as your physical health. Therefore, prioritise your emotional well-being by developing positive relationships, engaging in activities that bring you happiness, and seeking support when required. Prioritising mental health is an essential component of a balanced lifestyle.

Embarking on a journey towards a healthier and more meaningful life is crucial. It's a call to action to reassess, reinvent, and enjoy the beauty of conscious living. Medshield can help you kickstart this journey through our many exciting programmes, including #MedshieldMovement, an all-in-one fitness and resource centre available free for all Medshield members at medshieldmovement.co.za/. Embrace the opportunity to revitalise your lifestyle and develop a renewed sense of well-being.

SUSTAINABLE HEALING

How Fraud Prevention is Essential for Environmental Preservation



This Environmental Awareness Month, we shift our attention from traditional ecological issues to examine the complex relationship between our actions and various industries, especially the healthcare sector.

As we navigate through this article, we shed light on the widespread problems of fraud, waste, and abuse in the medical field, uncovering their significant impact on your well-being and the sustainability of the environment.

THE UNSEEN CONSEQUENCES: UNSUSTAINABLE HEALTHCARE PRACTICES

The sustainability of the healthcare and medical industry is greatly affected by fraud, waste and abuse. Unnecessary medical procedures result in increased waste and high premiums for members while over-prescribing medication leads to pharmaceutical waste. Fraudulent billing practices strain resources, risking patients' affordability and the service offerings of healthcare providers. Furthermore, these practices contribute to a more significant ecological crisis, including increased carbon footprint, medical waste disposal challenges, and higher energy consumption.

ALIGNING PRINCIPLES: SUSTAINABILITY IN HEALTHCARE PRACTICES

Addressing fraud, waste, and abuse in the medical sector aligns with environmental sustainability principles. By promoting responsible medical practices and advocating for ethical billing procedures, we can reduce member out-of-pocket expenses, lower unnecessary resource consumption, minimise medical waste, and alleviate the environmental impact caused by the healthcare industry.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE: INITIATIVES AND ENGAGEMENT

Environmental Awareness Month provides a unique chance for healthcare providers to participate in programmes prioritising transparency, accountability, and eco-friendly practices. Raising awareness among medical professionals and the general public is essential to encouraging the adoption of sustainable approaches by promoting ethical practices and responsible resource use.

REIMAGINING HEALTHCARE: A SUSTAINABLE VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Collaboration is essential in steering the medical industry towards a more environmentally conscious path while exploring various opportunities for change. A healthcare system that meets your needs and works in harmony with the environment provides sustainable living opportunities. Initiatives such as electronic health records help reduce paper waste, telemedicine through SmartCare reduces travel and medical costs, and efficient resource utilisation using Medshield Movement provides a blueprint for building a sustainable and responsible medical industry.

Environmental Awareness Month reminds us of the interdependence between environmental health and the well-being of our people and healthcare system. Addressing fraud, waste, and abuse in the medical industry is an important step towards creating a patient-centered and environmentally conscious healthcare landscape, benefitting both members and our planet.

NURTURING LIFE

Embracing Pregnancy Awareness with MedshieldMOM



MedshieldMOM, our dedicated maternity programme, goes beyond conventional healthcare by providing comprehensive support throughout pregnancy. As we celebrate Pregnancy Awareness, it's the perfect opportunity to explore the key aspects that make MedshieldMOM an outstanding partner for expecting mothers.

A COMPREHENSIVE ONLINE RESOURCE

MedshieldMOM's foundation is dedicated to its website, www.medshieldmom.co.za. This user-friendly platform serves as a comprehensive hub, providing valuable content on health, fitness, nutrition, and the different stages of pregnancy. Whether you're an expectant parent or going through the challenges of postpartum life, MedshieldMOM's online resource is designed to guide you from the beginning to the end of your motherhood journey.

EXPERT ADVICE TAILORED FOR YOU

MedshieldMOM ensures that the advice provided is formulated by professionals who have an in-depth understanding of pregnancy. The content is curated to address the unique needs of mothers at every stage, covering both health and wellness and emotional aspects of motherhood. This commitment to expert guidance sets MedshieldMOM apart as a reliable source of information for expectant and new mothers.

PERSONALISED UPDATES AND REMINDERS

Acknowledging the significance of timely information, MedshieldMOM keeps mothers informed about the size and development of their unborn child through personalised email updates. Furthermore, the programme sends reminders for crucial appointments with healthcare providers. It assists with hospital pre-authorisations, ensuring that mothers receive the care they need when needed.

ENDORSED BY AMBASSADORS

MedshieldMOM proudly boasts endorsements from ambassadors who recognise and appreciate the programme's dedication to maternal wellbeing. These endorsements highlight the programme's positive impact and reinforce its commitment to supporting mothers on their unique journeys.

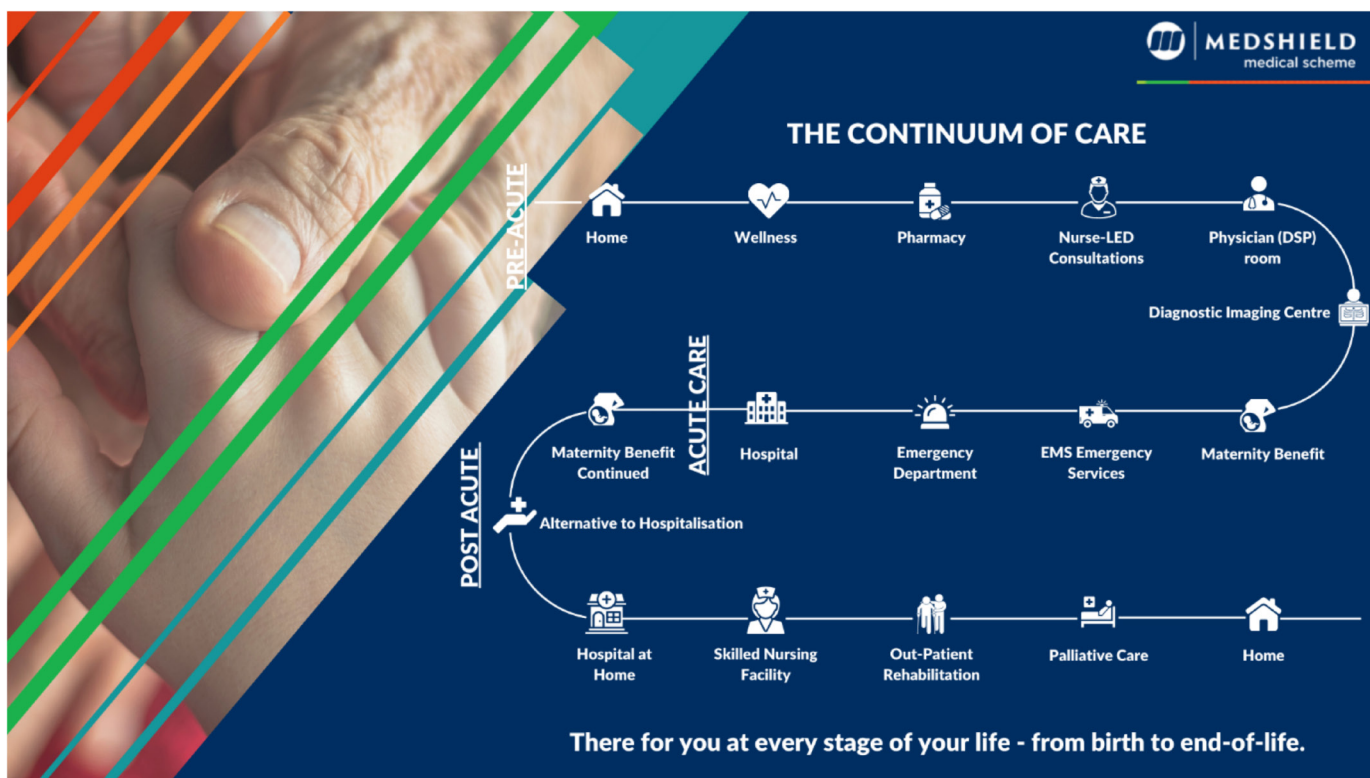
CONVENIENT AND ACCESSIBLE RESOURCES

MedshieldMOM understands the importance of convenience and accessibility. The programme provides easily accessible and reliable pregnancy resources, ensuring that mothers can access the information they need at their fingertips.

As Medshield walks the pregnancy journey alongside moms, it exemplifies a health cover partner that is dedicated to mom care and ensuring the health and happiness of the next generation of South Africans.

YOUR PATH TO WELLNESS

Exploring Medshield's Continuum of Care



In our last newsletter issue for the year 2023, we introduced you to Medshield's Continuum of Care. We provided you with an overview of the continuum of care. In this issue, we would like to share more about our continuum of care pathway and the programmes designed to make your healthcare journey easier. Whether you require preventative care, are managing chronic conditions, or are navigating complex medical procedures, our goal is to ensure you receive the highest quality of care tailored to your needs.

SEAMLESS CARE AT EVERY STAGE

Medshield's Continuum of Care is a comprehensive approach to healthcare that provides a seamless transition between various healthcare services. We aim to ensure you receive the proper care at the right time. This approach covers multiple services, from routine check-ups to specialised treatments. Our programmes include preventative care to keep you healthy, primary care for your day-to-day health needs, specialised treatment for chronic and complex medical conditions, hospitalisation and alternatives to support your hospital stays, rehabilitation, and long-term care for services to aid recovery and support long-term health management.

EXPLORING PROGRAMMES IN OUR CONTINUUM OF CARE

We offer specialised programmes to promote holistic healthcare and wellbeing. Here are some of our programme offerings:

Preventative Care	Diabetes Management
GP Nomination	Hospitalisation
Virtual Doctor Consultations	Alternatives to Hospitalisation – Home Health
SmartCare	Skilled Nursing Facility
Maternity	Palliative Care
Medicine and Disease Management	



BENEFIT OF MEDSHIELD'S CONTINUUM OF CARE

Our goal is to provide a spectrum of healthcare programmes that can minimise disruptions in your care, reduce the risk of complications, and ultimately improve your overall healthcare experience. We are dedicated to coordinating care tailored to your specific needs and preferences, ensuring that you receive personalised and integrated healthcare.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU

Medshield's Continuum of Care provides the support and resources you need to lead a healthy, fulfilling life. Whether you're seeking routine care or facing a health challenge, we're here to support you every step of the way. With Medshield's Continuum of Care, your path to wellness is clear, seamless, and supported by a team dedicated to your health and well-being. To find out more, visit the Medshield website at www.medshield.co.za

WORLD CANCER DAY

Close the Care Gap



UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT

Cancer is a disease that doesn't discriminate. It can affect anyone, regardless of age, gender, race, or socioeconomic status, causing immense suffering and grief for individuals and families around the world.

The statistics are alarming, with 19.3 million new cancer cases reported every year. About 10% of all cancers are caused by genetic mutations, while 27% of cancer-related deaths are due to tobacco and alcohol use. Surprisingly, many people are unaware that up to 50% of all cancers are preventable.

THE CARE GAP: A CRITICAL CHALLENGE

Despite the significant advancements in cancer research, diagnosis, and treatment, millions of people worldwide still face significant barriers to accessing quality care. A staggering 70% of global cancer deaths occur in low and middle-income countries, underlining the pressing need to improve access to cancer care globally.

CALL TO ACTION

"Close the Care Gap" is a call to action, urging governments, healthcare systems, advocacy groups and individuals to work together to bridge the gap in cancer care. Through education, advocacy and policy change, World Cancer Day seeks to address critical issues:

- **Prevention** – Emphasising the importance of healthy lifestyle choices, such as quitting tobacco, eating a balanced diet, engaging in regular physical activity, and protecting your skin from the sun, can significantly reduce the risk of developing cancer.
- **Early Detection** – Improved screening and diagnostic methods

can save lives by increasing awareness around signs and symptoms of cancer and empowering individuals to seek timely medical attention.

- **Access to Treatment and Care** – It is crucial to ensure that all individuals have access to high-quality cancer care, including essential medications, radiotherapy, and palliative care. This will help to reduce disparities in cancer outcomes globally.
- **Research and Innovation** – Investing in cancer research and innovation is crucial for developing new therapies, improving diagnostic tools and enhancing understanding of the disease mechanisms, ultimately leading to better prevention and treatment strategies.

MEDSHIELD HAS YOU COVERED

Experience the security and support of Medshield's coverage. Within our benefits plans, comprehensive oncology treatment is available under the Oncology Management Programme, run by Medshield in partnership with ICON Oncology. In the unfortunate event of a cancer diagnosis for you or your dependents, you can connect with Medshield's Oncology Disease Management team by dialling **086 000 2121**. They will provide a list of nearby ICON Oncology Group practices. You can then request your doctor to refer you to your preferred oncologist. Once you have appointed an oncologist, they will devise a treatment plan for you and submit it to Medshield for approval. Upon authorisation, Medshield will relay the approval to your ICON Oncologist. You will receive a letter specifying the approved treatment, quantities, and duration. With a robust network of over 335 specialist oncology doctors, Medshield ensures unwavering coverage and support throughout your and your family's journey.

DIRECTORY OF **MEDSHIELD** PARTNERS

SERVICE	PARTNER	CONTACT DETAILS
Ambulance and Emergency Services	Netcare 911	Contact number: 086 100 6337 (+27 10 209 8011) for members outside of the borders of South Africa
Chronic Medicine Authorisations and Medicine Management	Mediscor	Contact number: 086 000 2120 (Choose relevant option) or contact +27 10 597 4701 for members outside the borders of South Africa Facsimile: 0866 151 509 Authorisations: medshieldauths@mediscor.co.za
Dental Authorisations	Denis	Contact number: 086 000 2121 (+27 11 671 2011) for members outside of the borders of South Africa - Crowns/Bridges and Dental Implant Authorisations email: crowns@denis.co.za - Periodontic Applications email: perio@denis.co.za - Orthodontic Applications email: ortho@denis.co.za - Plastic Dentures email: customercare@denis.co.za In-Hospital Dental Authorisations email: hospitalenq@denis.co.za
Diabetes Care Programme	Medshield	Contact number: 086 000 2120 (+27 10 597 4701) for members outside the borders of South Africa Facsimile: +27 10 597 4706 email: Diabetesdiseasemanagement@medshield.co.za
Disease Management Programme	Medscheme	Contact number: 086 000 2121 (+27 11 671 2011) for members outside of the borders of South Africa email: diseasemanagement@medshield.co.za
Disease Management Care Plans	Mediscor	Contact number: 086 000 2120 (+27 10 597 4701) for members outside of the borders of South Africa Facsimile: +27 10 597 4706 email: pmbapplications@medshield.co.za
HIV and AIDS Management	HaloCare	Contact number: 086 014 3258 (Mon - Fri: 07h30 to 16h00) Facsimile: +27 086 570 2523 email: medshield@halocare.co.za
HIV Medication Designated Service Provider (DSP)	Pharmacy Direct	Contact number: 086 002 7800 (Mon to Fri: 07h30 to 17h00) Facsimile: 086 611 4000/1/2/3 email: care@pharmacydirect.co.za
Hospital Authorisations	Medscheme	Contact number: 086 000 2121 (+27 11 671 2011) for members outside of the borders of South Africa email: preauth@medshield.co.za
Hospital Claims	Medscheme	Contact number: 086 000 2121 (+27 11 671 2011) for members outside of the borders of South Africa email: hospitalclaims@medshield.co.za
Oncology Disease Management Programme (for Cancer treatment)	ICON and Medscheme	Contact number: 086 000 2121 (+27 11 671 2011) for members outside of the borders of South Africa email: oncology@medshield.co.za Medshield has partnered with the Independent Clinical Oncology Network (ICON) for the delivery of Oncology services. Go to the ICON website: www.cancernet.co.za for a list of ICON oncologists
Optical Services	Iso Leso Optics	Contact number: 086 000 2120 (+27 10 597 4701) for members outside of the borders of South Africa Facsimile: +27 11 782 5601 email: member@isoleso.co.za

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MEDSHIELD MEDICAL SCHEME CONTACT CENTRE **OPERATING HOURS**

Monday – Thursday: **8:15am to 17:00pm**
Friday: **8:30am to 17:00pm**