

Dear Antoinette

Thanks for your query in this regard, and the work you're doing to improve PMB awareness and understanding. These PMB's are an extremely complex component of the Medical Schemes Act, and consumers often struggle with understanding their implementation, which admittedly, is complex indeed.

At the outset, I must be frank and confirm that I believe you have misinterpreted our response to our member, Ms Seggie, who requested this PMB information from us. Your cover note claims that "Discovery failed to provide the information." I'd like to demonstrate to you why this is incorrect. Our consultant responded with 2 comprehensive documents, which set out all you need to know about PMB's:

1. The first document (titled PMB Treatment Guidelines) is a detailed description of the Chronic Disease List (CDL) PMB's. It lists every one of the CDL's, and in addition, it provides the full basket of care which we would automatically authorize for these conditions. In addition, the document sets out how the DHMS Chronic Illness Benefit funds these claims in respect of the various plan types.
2. The second document provides a simple language guideline to PMB's, focusing on the OHDPMB's, but unpacking and explaining the legislation to guide members around the PMB's. The document specifically directs members to our website, with step-by-step instructions of how to access PMB cover. In addition, the document also directs members to the Council for Medical Schemes website.

Whilst we do not specifically respond with a list of all 270 PMB diagnoses, we provide clear direction to members about where they can access this information, which is in the public domain. We absolutely have no reason whatsoever to withhold this list from members, though in the past we have not found it helpful to email out a long list of clinical diagnoses.

In respect of the ICD-10 code component of your query, this is easily explained. There are circa 40 000 ICD-10 codes in the coding schedule. Many thousands of these relate to PMB conditions. In fact on the CoMS latest schedule of PMB ICD-10 codes, there are 7500 codes listed. Although there are only 270 PMB diagnoses, depending on the specific clinical circumstances, these conditions can be coded differently using a wide variety of codes. We have sophisticated systems and specialized coding teams who focus on making these linkages. It does need to be done on a patient-by-patient basis in the case of the OH DPMB's, and consequently we work with healthcare professionals through the registration process of a member for a PMB condition to ensure accuracy in this regard. DHMS in fact remunerates the healthcare professionals at an agreed tariff for these detailed registration forms that are completed.

There are 2 other important issues of which you should be aware:

1. Discovery has been supportive of the CoMS's efforts to improve PMB awareness, and compliance. In fact, a couple years ago, we circulated the CoMS booklet on PMB's to our members at our own volition.
2. Discovery has actively participated on the CoMS task team for PMB's, which produced an important document as a guideline to schemes, members and healthcare professionals setting out how PMB's should be handled. Discovery has implemented these guidelines.

I hope this clears up your concern, and demonstrates clearly that our consultant's response to our member's query regarding PMB conditions was in fact more than adequate, and provided plenty information for a member to access, and links to the appropriate locations for the full lists if required.

Please feel free to contact us should you have further queries.

Regards,

Dr Ryan Noach  
*Discovery Health Deputy CEO*