

With **GEMS**  
**AFFORDABLE** means **RICH** in benefits.



# CHRONIC MEDICINE GUIDE

With GEMS affordable means rich in benefits



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# 1

## What's New in 2020?

**TO FURTHER INCREASE MEMBER VALUE AND IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF CARE AND SERVICE CONVENIENCE, GEMS HAS ENHANCED OR AMENDED CERTAIN MEDICINE BENEFITS. THE CHANGES CAME INTO EFFECT ON 1 JANUARY 2020.**

### Sapphire option name change

Sapphire option has been renamed Tanzanite One. Sapphire members who will remain on the option in 2020 will be transitioned to Tanzanite One and will retain their current membership numbers. New membership cards will be issued to members to reflect this change.

### Removal of certain medicines previously on the exclusion list for ALL options

GEMS has reviewed the medicine exclusion list for 2020. Five medicine groups and all associated the proprietary and non-proprietary preparations have been removed from the list, allowing these medicines to be funded from the acute benefit as of 1 January 2020. Where applicable, the Medicine Price List (MPL) will still apply.

#### The removed groups are:

- Betamethasone/Dexchlorpheniramine tablets and syrup
- Bromhexine HCl/Orciprenaline Sulphate syrup
- Chlordiazepoxide/Clidinium Bromide tablets
- Hyoscine-n-butylbromide/Dipyrone tabs
- Kanamycin/aminopentamide/pectin/bismuth carb/attapulgitte tablets and suspension.

### Funding for ADHD across all options and ages

Currently, chronic benefits for Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) are limited to childhood ADHD for Emerald, Emerald Value and Onyx. In 2020, ADHD benefits will be available **irrespective of the age of the patient across all options**, subject to managed care protocols and processes. The value add for 2020 is increased access to clinically appropriate care, noting that adult ADHD is now a clinically accepted diagnosis.

Some medicines prescribed for management of ADHD are high schedule medicines (S6) and require an original prescription each time the medication is dispensed. These prescriptions may not be made repeatable.



## Expansion of Emerald and Emerald Value chronic benefits

Currently, Onyx covers the highest number of additional chronic conditions outside of the prescribed minimum benefits (PMBs) chronic diseases list. From 2020, Emerald and Emerald Value will cover the same number of conditions as Onyx, including **Barrett's oesophagus, Huntington's disease, hypoparathyroidism, hyperthyroidism, interstitial lung**

**disease, myasthenia gravis, neuropathies, osteopenia, osteoporosis, Paget's disease, stroke, systemic sclerosis, thrombocytopenic purpura, valvular heart disease and Zollinger-Ellison syndrome.** Chronic medicines for these conditions will be accessed from the respective chronic medicine benefit limit for these options.

# 2

## What is chronic medicine?

Chronic medicine is used on an ongoing basis to treat long-lasting (chronic) illnesses that can be disabling and/or potentially life-threatening, such as diabetes or high blood pressure. These illnesses have a negative effect on your health and quality of life. Chronic medicines need to be taken regularly, over a long period, to manage the symptoms or control the effects of the chronic illness.

GEMS pays from your chronic medicine benefit for medicine to treat certain chronic conditions (see Section 3 – Chronic medical conditions) and that are considered clinically appropriate, cost effective and used according to the GEMS protocols.

Chronic medicines funded by GEMS are listed on the GEMS chronic medicine formulary (see Section 6, page 11 – GEMS chronic medicine formulary).

Formulary medicine, even when authorised, could incur a co-payment if it is priced above the GEMS MPL. Refer to Section 6, page 11 – GEMS chronic medicine formulary).

GEMS applies a 'disease authorisation' to approve medicines for the treatment of your chronic condition, not just for a medicine – This gives you access to a list of pre-approved medicines, referred to as a basket. Refer to Section 3 for more information on chronic medicine authorisations.





# 3

## GEMS Chronic Disease Management Programme

**GEMS WILL PAY FOR THE TREATMENT OF CERTAIN CHRONIC MEDICAL CONDITIONS FROM THE CHRONIC MEDICINE BENEFIT. TREATMENT MAY INCLUDE MEDICINE, CONSULTATIONS AND OTHER PROCEDURES OR INVESTIGATIONS TO MANAGE AND MONITOR THE CONDITION.**

You, your doctor or your pharmacist may call 0860 004 367 or email [chronicauths@gems.gov.za](mailto:chronicauths@gems.gov.za) to obtain authorisation for new chronic conditions. Medicines will be paid from the chronic medicine benefit only if your condition has been pre-authorised. The **Chronic Disease List (CDL)** lists chronic conditions covered as PMBs on **all gems options**, according to legislation and subject to managed care protocols, processes and formularies.

There is no need to email or fax documentation unless it is specifically requested. When calling to authorise a new chronic condition have a copy of the prescription available, detailing the doctor's details (name and practice number),

the diagnosis or ICD10 codes and the medicine details, such as strength and directions for use.

Once you have been registered for a chronic condition that is on the PMB CDL, you will have access to a care plan, which is a list of out-of-hospital services relevant to the condition(s). The care plan lists a mix of services such as doctor's visits, blood tests (pathology) and x-rays (radiology) that are available to you to ensure that you receive sufficient benefits to proactively manage and monitor your condition. No care plans are allocated for non-PMB chronic conditions.

**The 27 CDL conditions are listed below:**

CHRONIC DISEASE LIST	
1. Addison's disease	15. Epilepsy
2. Asthma	16. Glaucoma
3. Bipolar mood disorder	17. Haemophilia
4. Bronchiectasis	18. HIV/Aids
5. Cardiac failure	19. Hyperlipidaemia
6. Cardiomyopathy	20. Hypertension
7. Chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder	21. Hypothyroidism
8. Chronic renal disease	22. Multiple sclerosis
9. Coronary artery disease	23. Parkinson's disease
10. Crohn's disease	24. Rheumatoid arthritis
11. Dysrhythmias	25. Schizophrenia
12. Diabetes insipidus	26. Systemic lupus erythematosus
13. Diabetes mellitus type 1	27. Ulcerative colitis
14. Diabetes mellitus type 2	

Certain additional chronic conditions are paid for from the chronic medicine benefit, subject to managed care protocols, processes, formularies and available benefits, and appear on the additional chronic disease list (ACDL). The list below (page 4) details the conditions that GEMS cover.

Payment of medicine from the chronic benefit is affected by GEMS Scheme Rules such as waiting periods and scheme exclusions, available benefits and clinical guidelines, which may be updated periodically.

ADDITIONAL CHRONIC DISEASE LIST					
Condition	Tanzanite One	Beryl	Ruby	Emerald and Emerald Value	Onyx
Acne			✓	✓	✓
Allergic rhinitis			✓	✓	✓
Alzheimer's disease			✓	✓	✓
Ankylosing spondylitis			✓	✓	✓
Anorexia nervosa			✓	✓	✓
Anxiety	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Barrett's oesophagus			✓	✓	✓
Benign prostatic hyperplasia		✓	✓	✓	✓
Bulimia nervosa			✓	✓	✓
Delusional disorder			✓	✓	✓
Depression	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dermatitis			✓	✓	✓
Eczema			✓	✓	✓
Gastro-oesophageal reflux disease			✓	✓	✓
Generalised anxiety disorder			✓	✓	✓
Gout			✓	✓	✓
Huntington's disease			✓	✓	✓
Hypoparathyroidism			✓	✓	✓
Hyperthyroidism			✓	✓	✓
Interstitial lung disease			✓	✓	✓
Meniere's disease		✓	✓	✓	✓
Menopause			✓	✓	✓
Myasthenia gravis			✓	✓	✓
Narcolepsy			✓	✓	✓
Neuropathies			✓	✓	✓
Obsessive compulsive disorder			✓	✓	✓
Osteoarthritis		✓	✓	✓	✓
Osteopenia			✓	✓	✓
Osteoporosis			✓	✓	✓
Paget's disease			✓	✓	✓

ADDITIONAL CHRONIC DISEASE LIST					
Condition	Tanzanite One	Beryl	Ruby	Emerald and Emerald Value	Onyx
Post-traumatic stress syndrome			✓	✓	✓
Psoriasis		✓	✓	✓	✓
Stroke			✓	✓	✓
Systemic sclerosis			✓	✓	✓
Thrombocytopenic purpura			✓	✓	✓
Thrombo-embolic disease	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tourette's syndrome			✓	✓	✓
Valvular heart disease			✓	✓	✓
Zollinger-Ellison syndrome			✓	✓	✓

## 4

## Chronic medicine authorisation

### What is chronic medicine authorisation?

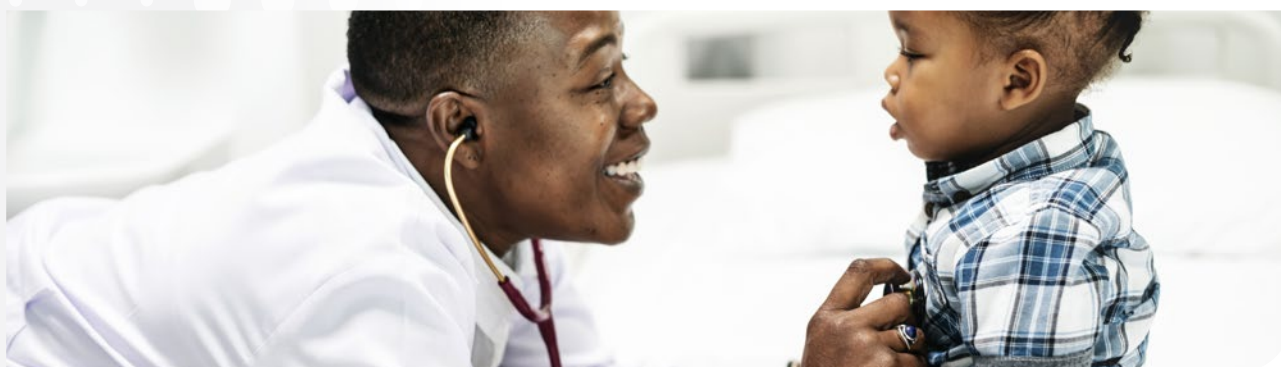
The word pre-authorisation is often shortened to 'authorisation' and means the same thing. A disease authorisation is a pre-approval request for payment of medicine from the chronic

medicine benefit. If the authorisation request is approved, GEMS will send you a confirmation of your disease authorisation.

### Why do I need an authorisation for my chronic medicine?

An authorisation means that your chronic medicine will be paid from your chronic medicine benefit and that you have access to GEMS disease managers to help you and your doctor manage your illness.

Without authorisation your chronic medicine will be paid from the acute medicine benefit, which should ideally be used for medicine for a short-term medical problem such as flu.



## How to obtain a chronic authorisation

Register all newly diagnosed chronic conditions with the GEMS chronic medicine authorisation department. The chronic medicine application process has been improved to enhance the member and provider experience. You and your pharmacist can now make changes to your chronic medicine profile and even do first-time registrations on the chronic medicine programme, telephonically.

- Telephonic channel: Call the GEMS call centre on 0860 004 367, press '4' for pre-authorisations, - select your language – then press '3' for chronic medicine enquiries and press '1' to register for the chronic medicine programme or to do updates.
- There is no need to email or fax documentation unless it is specifically requested.
- Once your chronic application has been processed you will receive a letter indicating the outcome of the authorisation.
- The medicine remarks section of the letter details reasons for a declined authorisation and indicates where more information is needed to reassess the authorisation request.
- The doctor may contact the chronic medicine authorisation department via email to [chronicauths@gems.gov.za](mailto:chronicauths@gems.gov.za) or call 0860 436 777 to appeal a clinical decision or submit a clinical motivation for review.
- GEMS will contact newly authorised members to facilitate the selection and nomination of a designated service provider (DSP) from the GEMS pharmacy network list from which the authorised chronic medicine(s) will be obtained.
- Simply provide your dispensing pharmacy with your prescription for dispensing.
- All chronic medicine claims are subject to the chronic formulary, the use of an allocated/nominated DSP from the GEMS pharmacy network, and promotion of use of generics through the application of the MPL.
- Below is the process flow for a chronic medicine registration and authorisation overview.

## How to obtain chronic medicines with Disease Authorisation





## Your chronic medicine access card

Below is an example of your chronic Medicine Access Card (MAC), which is confirmation of your chronic medicine authorisation (approval for payment on the chronic medicine benefit). Your chronic MAC will be sent to you when your medicine is first authorised on the chronic medicine benefit and, thereafter, with every update made to your chronic medicine authorisation.

Your chronic MAC shows your GEMS membership number, beneficiary code and the medical condition for which you are registered. Additional medicine approved outside of your condition's basket, or special exceptions, will be listed individually on the card.

Med Scheme No: 000123456		Beneficiary code: 01		<b># OF drug:</b> co-payment will apply above limits <b>+ OF drug:</b> co-payment will always apply <b>EXG drug:</b> payment will continue above limits N <b>drug:</b> payment will NOT continue above limits PMB <b>drug:</b> payment will continue above limits X MPL <b>drug:</b> co-payment may apply											
Approved Medicine or Condition		From	To	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
PMB	Hypertension	Feb-2020	Ongoing										***	***	***
PMB	Thrombo-Embolic Prophylaxis	Feb-2020	Ongoing										***	***	***
N	Hypotone 250mg	Feb-2020	Ongoing	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
PMB	Hyperlipidaemia	Jan-2020	Ongoing										***	***	***

Your chronic MAC tells you and your pharmacist what chronic condition you are approved for, but it is not a prescription. You will still need to give a prescription to your pharmacy before it can dispense your chronic medicine. A chronic prescription can be repeated for only six months.

Your chronic MAC also gives you information on the payment rules for each of the listed medicine(s) authorised for you. Six types of payment rules can apply to your chronic medicine authorisation, individually or in combination.

## Understanding your chronic MAC

The payment rules are as follows:

- **Out-of-formulary (OF) drugs** - there are two types of OF medicine:
  - # OF drug – this medicine is not on the formulary for your option and when your benefits are finished for the year you will have a co-payment.
  - + OF drug – this medicine is not on the formulary for your option and you will have a co-payment every time you get this medicine even if you still have benefits.
- **EXG drug:** This medicine is approved for payment on the ex gratia benefit and is paid from the date it was approved as ex gratia for that benefit year only.
- **N drug:** GEMS will not pay for this medicine when your benefits are finished for the year.
- **PMB drug:** GEMS will pay for this medicine throughout the year, regardless of the benefits available.
- **X MPL drug:** GEMS will pay for this medicine up to a maximum price determined by GEMS.

Find more details on the types of co-payments applicable in the medicine co-payments section of this guide. More than one type of payment rule and medicine co-payment can apply to a single medicine.

## What do I do if my doctor changes my medicine or prescribes an additional medicine that is not on my chronic MAC?

You can add new formulary medicine quickly and easily at your pharmacy with a new prescription, without having to contact the GEMS chronic medicine authorisation department. In most cases your pharmacist or doctor will be able to assist you and will call the department if there is a need, for instance, if:

- You are registering for the first time for chronic medicine;
- you are diagnosed with a new condition;
- the medicine you are prescribed is not on the formulary or in the basket for your medical condition, or
- you are requesting a higher-dosage medicine than is listed in the basket for your medical condition.

Your doctor may also contact the call centre to provide a clinical motivation for medicines that have been declined to be paid from the chronic medicine benefit. The motivation may be done telephonically on the GEMS chronic medicine management department on 0860 436 777.

If you use the GEMS chronic courier pharmacy, you will need to either fax your new prescription to 0861 004 367, email it to [chronicdsp@gems.gov.za](mailto:chronicdsp@gems.gov.za), post the original to

GEMS, Private Bag X782, Cape Town 8000, or hand it in at a GEMS walk-in centre (refer to the back of this guide for a list of GEMS walk-in centres).

If you use a GEMS network pharmacy to obtain your chronic medicine, email the prescription to [chronicdsp@gems.gov.za](mailto:chronicdsp@gems.gov.za) or fax it to 0861 004 367, and hand the original prescription to your pharmacy to enable it to dispense your medicine. Clearly write your membership number on the prescription.

## 5

### Pharmacy allocation process

GEMS established the chronic medicine pharmacy network to expand access to medicine for all beneficiaries and to give qualifying community pharmacies an opportunity to render healthcare services to GEMS beneficiaries.

**As a GEMS beneficiary on the Chronic Medicine Management Programme (CMMP), you are now able to choose how you receive your chronic medicine. You can either:**

- select any of the community pharmacies on the pharmacy network. A list of these providers is available at [www.gems.gov.za](http://www.gems.gov.za), or
- have it delivered by the GEMS chronic courier pharmacy to a preferred physical address.

**GEMS offers all chronic beneficiaries an opportunity to be allocated to their preferred pharmacy provider. Here is what you need to know about the pharmacy allocation process:**

- Once you have nominated and been allocated to a network pharmacy or chronic courier pharmacy, you should obtain your medicine from that DSP pharmacy for a minimum of six months.
- When the six months end, you can ask to re-nominate the same pharmacy or select another pharmacy on the network.
- You have an allowance of one claim/visit per year to use for claiming of your chronic medicine from any pharmacy other than your allocated or nominated pharmacy (even if the pharmacy is part of the network), whereafter you will be liable for a 30% non-DSP co-payment for your chronic medicine.

**Should you wish to change your allocated/nominated pharmacy, call 0860 004 367. You may nominate another network pharmacy before the six months has elapsed only when:**

- You have changed employers, or your employment address.
- You have changed your residential address.
- Six months have passed since the initial allocation.
- Your preferred pharmacy is no longer part of the network.
- You receive poor service or are not happy with your current allocated/nominated pharmacy.

## **How to prevent medicine oversupply**

**If you have more chronic medicine than you need at the end of the month, especially when you have taken your medicine as prescribed by your doctor, do the following:**

- Check that you are taking your medicines exactly as your doctor instructed, i.e. the correct dose, quantity and time intervals.
- Set reminders to take your medicine at a preferred time. Do not skip a day.
- If you still have surplus product, visit the GEMS website, print and complete the 'Chronic medicine delivery amendment' form or call the GEMS chronic courier pharmacy to change your delivery arrangements.

## **GEMS pharmacy network**

A number of corporate and community pharmacies have been contracted by GEMS as chronic medicine DSPs to supply chronic medicine to GEMS members. These pharmacies are part of the GEMS pharmacy network.

## **How do I use the network?**

The chronic medicine manager will offer you a choice of network pharmacies near your home or your work, whichever is more convenient. Once you have chosen a pharmacy, you will be registered with that pharmacy and must obtain your chronic medicine from it for a minimum of six months.

## **What happens if I get my chronic medicine from a pharmacy other than the one with which I am registered?**

You will pay a non-DSP co-payment of 30% to the new pharmacy. You do not pay a non-DSP co-payment if you use your nominated pharmacy, thus it is in your best interest to shop there.

## **What do I do if I want to change my nominated pharmacy?**

If the nominated network pharmacy becomes inconvenient because you have moved home or changed work address, contact GEMS to nominate another network pharmacy close to your home or work. Alternatively, nominate the GEMS chronic courier pharmacy.

## **Preventive screening at network pharmacies**

Screening is paramount to ensure that medical conditions are detected early. Preventive care services, for example, the flu vaccine and screening, are available at all pharmacies. Ask your pharmacist for a list of screening and preventive care tests and use these services because they can help identify diseases before they worsen. As GEMS will pay for this service from the risk benefit, your day to-day benefits will not be affected.

## **GEMS chronic courier pharmacy**

The GEMS chronic courier pharmacy is a GEMS DSP for chronic medicine. You may have your chronic medicine delivered by the courier pharmacy or you may collect it from an allocated network pharmacy.

If you prefer delivery, you will be allocated to the courier pharmacy for a minimum of six months. The six month stipulation, which is in line with your six-month script cycle, also applies if you use a network pharmacy.



### The GEMS chronic courier pharmacy:

- Delivers to a work, home or holiday address or to your doctor's rooms if you have made a delivery arrangement with your doctor.
- Delivers free of charge and normally between 08:00 and 17:00 on weekdays.
- Requires the signature of an authorised person if you are not there to receive your medicine.
- Needs the details of the authorised person beforehand

### Things to bear in mind:

- You will receive an SMS with a tracking number before the courier pharmacy delivers your parcel.
- If you have not supplied a cellphone number or if the SMS is not successfully delivered to your phone, a courier pharmacy consultant will call you to give you the tracking number.
- Ensure that GEMS has your current contact details on record at all times.
- You, or the person who receives the parcel, may have to produce identification and sign the delivery note when the courier delivers the medicine.
- The delivery note included in the parcel details the address GEMS has on file as the next delivery address.

## How safe is it to courier my medicine?

- All medicine is wrapped in protective material to ensure that it is not damaged in transit.
- Medicine in fragile containers is placed in plastic containers marked with 'valuable cargo' stickers, to ensure careful and safe handling.
- Parcels are sent via a courier service and a unique tracking number is allocated to each parcel so that it can be easily traced.
- Strict confidentiality of medicine in transit is assured.

## How does the courier pharmacy maintain the cold chain?

- Parcels containing cold storage items, such as insulin, are packaged, kept cool and dispatched only at 17:00 each day before transportation.
- The parcels are packed securely, marked 'refrigerated and fragile' and sent with ice packs to maintain the correct storage conditions.

## How do I change the delivery address?

If you will not be available at the address on file for a scheduled delivery or if you, for example, you are going on holiday, inform the courier pharmacy at least seven working days before the delivery date.

## How do I pay my co-payment?

By direct deposit, credit card and debit order, EasyPay or Pay@.

# 6

## GEMS chronic medicine formulary

### What is the GEMS chronic medicine formulary?

The GEMS chronic medicine formulary is a list of medicines that GEMS will pay for from your chronic medicine benefit if your chronic condition is approved by the Scheme. This list is specific to the GEMS option on which you are registered. Even when authorised and obtained from an allocated network pharmacy, formulary medicines incur a co-payment, if they are priced above the GEMS MPL.

### How is the formulary compiled?

Medical experts compile the formulary based on scientific literature and according to accepted treatment guidelines. These experts review the formulary regularly and update it when necessary to make sure that the most appropriate and cost-effective medicine is available to treat chronic conditions.

### Why should my doctor prescribe formulary medicine?

A formulary informs your doctor which medicine GEMS will pay for to treat your chronic illness. By prescribing a medicine from the formulary, your doctor will help you to avoid co-payments.

### Which medicines are on the chronic medicine formulary?

Visit [www.gems.gov.za](http://www.gems.gov.za) > Members > Tools > ICD10 to find out which medicines are on the formulary for your benefit option. Alternatively, call 0860 004 367, or your doctor can call 0860 436 777, and follow the voice prompts to reach the chronic medicine management department.

### What if my doctor prescribes a medicine not on the formulary?

You will have to make a co-payment to the pharmacy that dispenses your medicine. The pharmacy will tell you how much. If there is a sound medical reason that you cannot use any of the medicine on the formulary to treat your chronic condition, your doctor may submit a motivation to GEMS. GEMS will assess this motivation and may consider paying in full for the non-formulary medicine, if clinically necessary.

## Generic medicine and the MPL

### What is a generic medicine?

A generic medicine contains the same active ingredients, in the same strength and the same dosage form (e.g. tablet or capsule) as the original product. It has the same effect as the original medicine and is less expensive. Generic medicines are used throughout the world as they help to keep medicine costs down.

Generic medicines may be used with confidence in South Africa, as all are registered with the Medicines Control Council. Not all medicines have a generic equivalent, but your pharmacist will advise on this. Medicines for which there is a generic available are indicated with an X on your chronic MAC.



## What is the MPL?

The MPL is a reference pricing system that GEMS uses to work out the prices of groups of medicines. The medicines are grouped according to similarity in ingredients, strength and form. The MPL indicates the maximum price that GEMS will pay for medicine. Where a beneficiary or service provider chooses medicine that costs more than the reference price, the beneficiary will pay the difference. The MPL does not restrict the beneficiary's choice of which medicine to use - it just limits the price that GEMS will pay. The MPL contains not only generic equivalents, but the group of medicines (including original and generics).

Ask your pharmacist to supply medicine on the MPL so that you avoid a co-payment.

## Co-payment

### What is a medicine co-payment?

A share of the costs of a chronic medicine claim that you pay directly to your dispensing pharmacy.

### When might I have a co-payment?

**There are three types of co-payments. You can incur more than one of these at a time.**

- **Non-DSP co-payment**  
This co-payment occurs if you obtain your medicine from a pharmacy other than the one you nominated and is 30% of the price of the claim. This co-payment is not shown on your chronic MAC. To avoid this co-payment, always obtain your medicine from the pharmacy that you nominated or the GEMS chronic courier pharmacy.
- **MPL co-payment**  
This co-payment occurs if you choose a medicine that costs more than the GEMS maximum price for that medicine or for which there is a generic equivalent available (if you choose the original branded medicine rather the less-expensive generic medicine). The co-payment is the difference between the price of the medicine you take and the maximum price that GEMS will pay for the medicine.  
  
An MPL co-payment can occur together with a non-DSP or out-of-formulary co-payment. Your pharmacist can assist you with choosing a generic equivalent medicine within the GEMS MPL rate. An MPL co-payment is indicated with an X on your chronic MAC. To avoid this co-payment, ask your doctor to prescribe medicine within the MPL price range or consult your pharmacist.
- **Out-of-formulary co-payment**  
The OF co-payment occurs when the medicine you choose is not listed on the GEMS formulary for your option.

#### **It can apply:**

- When your annual benefits have been used up (this is indicated with a # symbol on your chronic MAC).
- Throughout the year, regardless of what benefits you have available (this is indicated with a + symbol on your chronic MAC).

This co-payment is indicated with an 'OF' on your chronic MAC. To avoid this co-payment, ask your doctor to prescribe medicine on the formulary for your option. The doctor will need to supply you with a new prescription should the medication be changed to an in-formulary medicine.



## Chronic medicine compliance

To best control your chronic illness, take your medicine regularly and exactly as your doctor has instructed. This will help prevent your chronic illness from worsening and help prevent complications.

**Take the correct dosage** as prescribed by your doctor and indicated on your medicine labels. Do not change your dose because you feel better or because you think you need more or less medicine. Change the dose only if your doctor tells you to do so - this is especially important with chronic medicine you, as it is preventing you from becoming sicker or developing other or more serious illnesses.

**Take it at the correct intervals during the day** as prescribed by your doctor, for example once, twice or three times a day. Make sure you understand exactly what these intervals mean and adhere to them. Twice a day usually means every 12 hours – or morning and night. It does not mean one tablet early in the morning and a second at lunchtime. If you are not sure what the dosing intervals mean, ask your pharmacist.

**Take it at the correct time.** Should your doctor specify exact time(s), adhere to these to ensure that your medicine works properly.

**Follow special instructions about food.** Should your

doctor or pharmacist give instructions on when to take your medicine in relation to food, adhere to the instructions. If you are to take your medicine before or after food, ask your pharmacist how long before or after food.

**Most important of all, take your medicine on an ongoing basis.** Chronic medicine is used to treat chronic illnesses. Your illness will not get better on its own. You need to take your medicine for as long as your doctor says– usually for the rest of your life. Do not stop taking your medicine because you feel better or because a friend suggests you stop.

If you are not able to take your medicine because of side effects or because it does not fit in with your daily work or life schedule, discuss this with your doctor. Do not stop your medicine without discussing it with your doctor.

If you do not take your medicine as you should, you skip doses or you stop taking it, your chronic illness may no longer be controlled. Your symptoms may worsen or you may even need to be hospitalised.

Although most patients begin to feel well when taking chronic medicine, it does not mean that the illness is cured. It means only that it is being controlled by the medicine, so carry on taking your medicine to keep feeling well.

### Prescription renewal

Never interrupt your chronic medicine treatment. Make sure your prescriptions are always up to date by asking your doctor for a new, repeatable prescription before your current prescription expires.

Certain medicines may not be prescribed on a repeatable prescription, for example high schedule medicines such as S6, which require strict monitoring and control. Your doctor will have to prescribe a maximum of one month's supply of this medicine for as long as it must be taken. Your doctor and pharmacist can help you identify which of your prescribed medicines need to comply with this legislative requirement.

Your nominated pharmacy needs a valid and original doctor's prescription to dispense your medicine. This is a legal requirement. According to legislation, you cannot have more repeats than the number specified by your doctor on your prescription, effective from the date of the prescription. A prescription cannot be repeated for more than six months.

Your pharmacy will usually remind you to get a new prescription before your old one expires. GEMS will also remind you via SMS.

If you are using the GEMS chronic courier pharmacy, fax your prescription to 0861 004 367, email it to [chronicdsp@gems.gov.za](mailto:chronicdsp@gems.gov.za), post your original prescription to GEMS, Private Bag X782, Cape Town 8000, or hand it in at a GEMS walk-in centre. Write your membership number clearly on the prescription.

If you are using a GEMS network pharmacy, fax the prescription to 0861 004 367 and hand the original prescription to your pharmacy.

To manage your chronic condition better, GEMS recommends that you use one doctor, whenever possible, to look after all your healthcare needs. You can contact GEMS to nominate this doctor. All members on Tanzanite One, Beryl and Emerald Value need to obtain their prescriptions from a doctor on the GEMS network.

# 8

## Advance supply chronic medicine

If travelling outside South Africa, you may apply for an advance supply of your chronic medicine. The maximum amount of advance medicine supply you can request should be equivalent to one month's stock.

When applying for an advance supply, complete for each beneficiary an 'Acknowledgment of debt' form and email it to [enquiries@gems.gov.za](mailto:enquiries@gems.gov.za) or fax to 0861 00 4367. Obtain the form by contacting GEMS on 0860 004 367 or log onto [www.gems.gov.za](http://www.gems.gov.za).

### Attach the following documents to the request:

- Flight itinerary or a letter confirming the departure and return dates, or a travel plan if you are travelling by road.
- All travel documents if using other modes of transport while travelling.
- A new prescription if your current prescription will expire during your time away.
- Employment contract if travelling abroad for work.
- Details of the date on which you will collect the medicine from your nominated pharmacy or the date on which you would like the GEMS chronic courier pharmacy to deliver.

GEMS will notify you if your advanced medicine supply request has been approved or provide reasons if it has been declined.

## How to apply for an emergency supply of medicine

### You can apply for an emergency (urgent) supply of medicine if:

- You are a new beneficiary on the CMMP and you need your medicine to be authorised urgently.
- You are an existing beneficiary on the CMMP and require an urgent supply of medicine for a new condition, or for new or changed medicine.

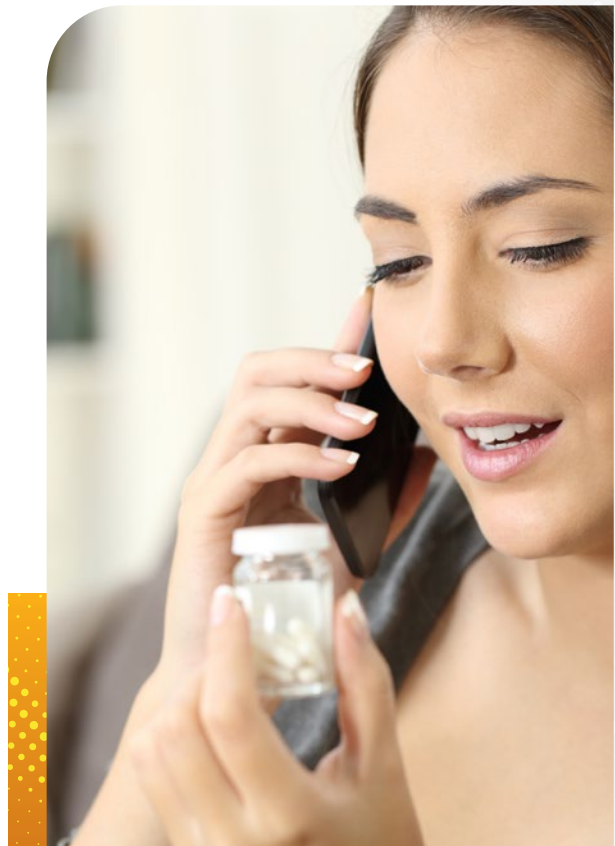
### First-time user

You or your doctor may contact the GEMS chronic authorisations department to register your medicine for clinical review and authorisation. Once authorised, you will be enrolled on the CMMP and you will receive a chronic MAC.

### Existing user

You may change medicine or add new medicine at your pharmacy with a new prescription. In most cases, your pharmacist or doctor will assist you to call the GEMS chronic medicine authorisation department (members may call 0860 004 367 and pharmacists or doctors 0860 436 777).

The turnaround time for a normal authorisation is five days and it takes a maximum of 72 hours to complete an emergency supply authorisation.



# 9

## HIV disease management programme

GEMS has a dedicated and confidential HIV disease management programme, which aims to improve health outcomes for all HIV-positive beneficiaries. All beneficiaries who test positive for HIV need to register on the programme to access their allocated benefit entitlements.

The programme also offers HIV prevention programmes such as prevention of mother-to-child transmission, pre-exposure prophylaxis and post-exposure prophylaxis.

**You may register on the programme(s) or obtain more information by contacting the HIV disease management programme on the following confidential channels:**

Call: 0860 436 736  
Call request: Send a 'please call me' to 083 843 6764  
Fax: 0800 436 732  
Email: [hiv@gems.gov.za](mailto:hiv@gems.gov.za)

All information shared with GEMS is treated as confidential. GEMS will not discuss your HIV status with anyone but you.

# 10

## Contact details

### Enquiries

GEMS member call centre:	0860 004 367
GEMS provider call centre:	0860 436 777
Fax:	0861 004 367
Email (for general enquiries and claims):	<a href="mailto:enquiries@gems.gov.za">enquiries@gems.gov.za</a>
Email (for chronic medicine):	<a href="mailto:chronicdsp@gems.gov.za">chronicdsp@gems.gov.za</a>
Postal Address:	GEMS, Private Bag X782, Cape Town 8000
Website:	<a href="http://www.gems.gov.za">www.gems.gov.za</a>





### GEMS walk-in centres

GEMS is on hand to help members with information about their benefit usage or claims, or anything related to the Scheme and membership. GEMS has 18 walk-in centres in South Africa, two in every province, staffed by agents devoted to answering members' questions.

Visit us today.

### Operating hours

Monday to Friday: 08:00 to 17:00  
Saturday: 08:00 to 12:00

PROVINCE		STREET ADDRESS
<b>Eastern Cape</b>		
	East London	Gillwell Shopping Centre, Shop LG36, Cnr Gillwell Road and Fleet Street
	Mthatha	Savoy Complex, Units 11 and 12A, Nelson Mandela Drive
<b>Free State</b>		
	Bloemfontein	Bloem Plaza, Shop 124, Charlotte Maxeke Street
	Welkom	Gold Fields Mall, Shop 51A, Cnr Strateway and Buiten Street
<b>Gauteng</b>		
	Braamfontein	Traduna House, 118 Jorrisen Street, Ground Floor, Cnr Jorrisen and Civic Boulevard (opposite Civic Centre)
	Pretoria - Arcadia	Sancardia Building, Shop 51, Cnr Stanza Bopape and Steve Biko streets, Arcadia
<b>Limpopo</b>		
	Polokwane	Shop 1, 52 Market Street
	Tohoyandou	Unit G3, Metropolitan Centre
<b>Mpumalanga</b>		
	Mbombela (Nelspruit)	Shop No 18, Nedbank Centre, 30 Brown Street, Nelspruit CBD
	eMalahleni (Witbank)	Safeways Crescent Centre, Shop S67, Cnr President and Swartbos streets, Die Heuwel
<b>North West</b>		
	Klerksdorp	City Mall, Shop 101, Cnr OR Tambo and President Street, Klerksdorp CBD
	Mafikeng	Mmabatho Megacity, Shopping Centre, Shop 39, Cnr Sekame and James Moraka streets, Mmabatho
<b>Northern Cape</b>		
	Kimberley	New Park Centre, Shop 14, Bultfontein Way and Lawson Street
	Upington	61A Market Street
<b>KwaZulu-Natal</b>		
	Durban	The Berea Centre, Shop G18, Entrance 1, 249 Berea Road, Berea
	Pietermaritzburg	Deloitte House, Suite 3, Block A, 181 Hoosen Haffeejee Street (Berg Street)
<b>Western Cape</b>		
	Worcester	Mountain Mill Shopping Centre, Shop 125A and B, Mountain Mill Drive
	Cape Town	Constitution House, 124 Adderley Street