

YOUR 2021 GEMS **CHRONIC MEDICINE GUIDE**



Table of Contents

1. What's New In 2021?	1
2. What Is Chronic Medicine?	2
3. GEMS Chronic Disease Management Programmes	3
• Chronic disease list	
• Additional chronic disease list	
4. Chronic Medicine Authorisation	6
• How to obtain a chronic authorisation	
• Your chronic medicine access card	
5. Pharmacy Allocation Process	10
6. GEMS Pharmacy Network	12
7. Preventative Screening At Network Pharmacies	15
8. Co-payments	15
9. GEMS Chronic Medicine Formulary	16
• Generic medicine and medicine price list	
10. Chronic Medicine Compliance	18
• Prescription renewal	
11. Advance Supply Chronic Medicine	20
• How to apply for an emergency supply of medicine	
12. HIV Disease Management Programme	21
13. Contact Details	23
• GEMS walk-in centres	

1. What's New in 2021?

IN LINE WITH OUR COMMITMENT TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT, GEMS HAS AMENDED CERTAIN MEDICINE BENEFITS FURTHER AIMED AT IMPROVING ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTHCARE. THESE CHANGES WILL COME INTO EFFECT ON 01 JANUARY 2021.

Addition of Dementia to the Additional Chronic Disease List (ACDL) for Emerald, Emerald Value and Onyx.

From 1 January 2021, Dementias (including, but not limited to Multi-infarct, Subcortical, Vascular and Alcohol) will be covered on Emerald, Emerald Value and Onyx options in addition to the existing list of conditions covered. Chronic medicines for these conditions will be accessed from the respective chronic medicine benefit limit for these options, and will be funded subject to the chronic medicine protocol and formulary.

Expansion of Tanzanite One and Beryl Chronic Benefits

The annual chronic benefit limits for Tanzanite One (T1) and Beryl will be increased. The benefit limit for Tanzanite One (in 2020) was R1000.00. For 2021 this will increase to R3640.00 per beneficiary, per annum. For Beryl, it will be increased from R2000.00 to R4576.00 per beneficiary, per annum. This limit covers all chronic medicines for PMB and non-PMB conditions listed in Annexure D of the Scheme Rules. Once depleted, PMB conditions will pay above the limit from risk whilst for non-PMBs, the Ex-gratia application process may be followed to request additional benefits for the funding of these chronic medicines.

Once the non-PMB chronic medicine limit has been reached, medicines authorized for the treatment of PMB conditions, subject to the comprehensive formulary, will continue to be paid throughout the year.

2. What is Chronic Medicine?

Chronic medicine is medication that 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. Chronic medicines need to be taken regularly, over a long period, to manage the symptoms or control the effects of the chronic illness.

The GEMS chronic benefit limit covers your chronic medicines for chronic conditions (see Section 3 – Chronic medical conditions) subject to formularies and the Scheme's reimbursement rate as per the Medicine Price List (MPL).

Chronic medicines funded by GEMS are listed

on the GEMS chronic medicine formulary (see Section 6– 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 – GEMS chronic medicine formulary).

GEMS applies 'disease authorisation baskets' as opposed to individual medicine authorization for the majority of chronic medicine authorisation requests for the treatment of your chronic condition. This gives you access to a list of pre-approved medicines, referred to as a basket. Refer to Section 4 for more information on chronic medicine authorisations.



3. GEMS Chronic Disease Management Programmes

GEMS will pay for the treatment of certain chronic medical conditions as part of the Disease Management Programme. Treatment may include medicine, consultations and other procedures or investigations to manage and monitor the condition.

You may call **0860 004 367** or send an email to chronicdsp@gems.gov.za to obtain authorisation for new chronic conditions. Alternatively, your doctor or pharmacy may call **0860 436 777** to obtain an authorisation on your behalf. 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, pathology tests e.g. blood tests and radiology benefits e.g. X-rays 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.

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

Certain additional chronic conditions are paid from the chronic medicine benefit, subject to managed care protocols, processes, formularies and available benefits, and appear on the additional chronic disease list (ACDL) as per Annexure D of the Scheme Rules. The list below details the additional conditions that GEMS covers on the different options. Payment of medicine from the chronic benefit is governed 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				✓	✓
Dementias, including (but not limited to), multi-infarct, sub-cortical vascular and alcohol				✓	✓
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				✓	✓

ADDITIONAL CHRONIC DISEASE LIST					
Condition	Tanzanite One	Beryl	Ruby	Emerald and Emerald Value	Onyx
Narcolepsy				✓	✓
Neuropathies				✓	✓
Obsessive compulsive disorder				✓	✓
Osteoarthritis			✓	✓	✓
Osteopenia				✓	✓
Osteoporosis				✓	✓
Paget's disease				✓	✓
Post-traumatic stress syndrome				✓	✓
Psoriasis			✓	✓	✓
Stroke*				✓	✓
Systemic sclerosis				✓	✓
Thrombocytopenic purpura*				✓	✓
Thrombo-embolic disease*			✓	✓	✓
Tourette's syndrome				✓	✓
Valvular heart disease*				✓	✓
Zollinger-Ellison syndrome				✓	✓

*Chronic DTP PMB conditions are covered on all options in accordance with Scheme formularies



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 an 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. You may also be faced with out-of-pocket expenses if your medication is not authorised to be claimed from your chronic benefit.

How to obtain a chronic authorisation

A chronic authorisation is obtained through registration of your 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 the outcome of your application and indicates where more information is needed to reassess the authorisation request where applicable.
- The doctor may contact the chronic medicine authorisation department via email to **enquiries@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

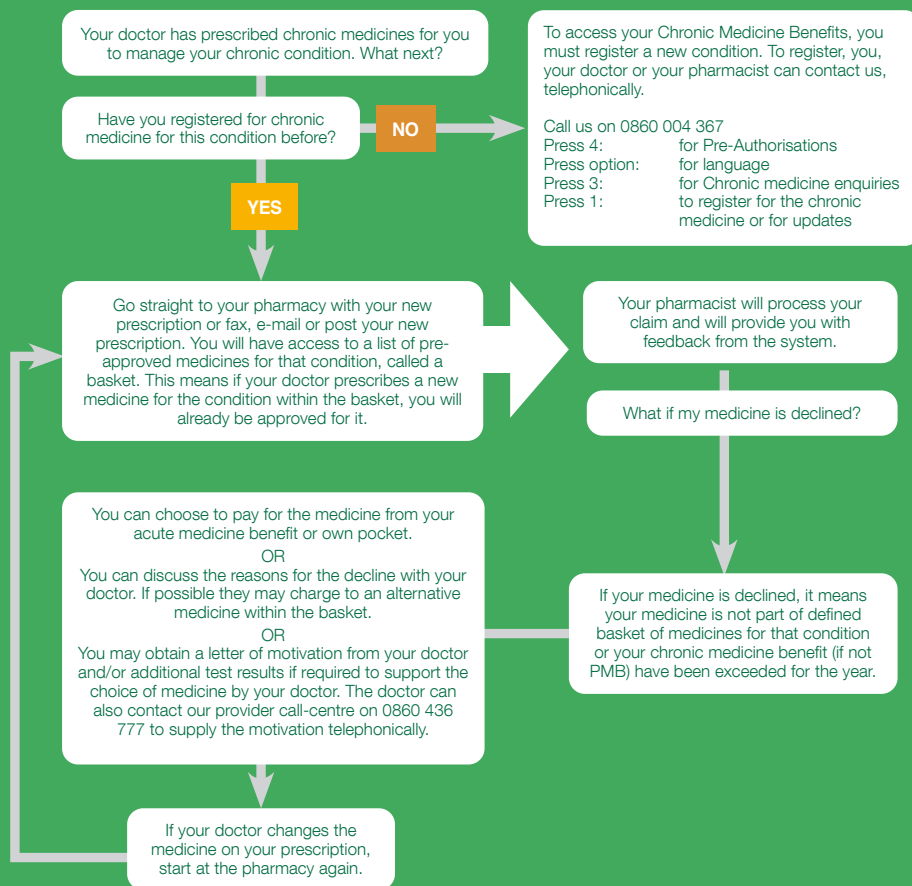
authorised chronic medicine(s) will be obtained.

- 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 use of generics through the

application of the MPL where appropriate. The formularies may be accessed from: www.gems.gov.za > Home > Healthcare Providers > Formularies .

- Below is the process flow for a chronic medicine registration and authorisation overview.

How to obtain chronic medicine 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 authorisation. Your chronic MAC will be sent to you in a chronic authorisation letter when your medicine is first authorised on the chronic medicine benefit and, thereafter, with every update made to your chronic conditions or when a medicine exception is authorised.

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				*** Disease Authorisation: Disease Basket available + OF drug: co-payment will always apply EXG drug: payment will continue above limits N drug: payment will NOT continue above limits PMB drug: payment will continue above limits X MPL drug: 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-2021	Ongoing										***	***	***
PMB	Thrombo-Emboloc Prophylaxis	Feb-2021	Ongoing										***	***	***
N	Hypotone 250mg	Feb-2021	Ongoing	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
PMB	Hyperlipidaemia	Jan-2021	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. Five 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:**
 - **+ 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 depleted for the year.
- **PMB drug:** GEMS will pay for this medicine throughout the year, regardless of the availability of your chronic medicine benefits.
- **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.

First-time user

You, your doctor or pharmacist may contact the GEMS chronic authorisations department to register you on the program then clinically review and authorise your medicine. Once your medicine is authorised, you will be enrolled on the CMMP and you will receive a chronic authorisation letter and MAC.

Existing user

If you are already registered on the chronic programme, and receive a new prescription with a change in medicine dosage, addition of a new chronic medicine or condition, call the GEMS chronic medicine authorisation department for assistance.

You, the member, may call **0860 004 367** to request an update. Your pharmacist or doctor can call the GEMS chronic medicine authorisation department on **0860 436 777** to do this update on your behalf.

Telephonically, the GEMS chronic medicine authorisation department should be able to assist you immediately with a registration or update. Please have all the required information available before making the call, such as prescribing doctor's practice number, diagnosis and diagnosis code, name of medicine, strength and required dosage.

There are exceptions where the request has to be referred for further clinical review which can take up to 7 days. The turnaround time for a paper based authorisation is five working days and it takes a maximum of 72 hours to complete an emergency authorisation submitted by paper.

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, post the original to get your authorised chronic medicines from there.

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 on the GEMS website, please visit: www.gems.gov.za under Home > Healthcare Providers > Designated Healthcare Providers then select your Province and the Pharmacy near you.
- Select GEMS Chronic Courier Pharmacy and have it delivered to your preferred physical address.

GEMS offers all chronic beneficiaries an opportunity to be allocated to their preferred designated 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 and you would like to change pharmacies, you may select another pharmacy on the network.
- You have an allowance of one claim per year from any pharmacy other than your allocated or nominated pharmacy (even if the pharmacy is part of the network) for your chronic medicines, where after you will be liable for a 30% non-DSP co-payment.

Should you wish to change your allocated/nominated pharmacy, call **0860 004 367**, select option 4, select your language, select 3 and then select 2 or email chronicdsp@gems.gov.za. 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.
- 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.
- If you still have surplus product and are allocated to a retail pharmacy, please speak to your pharmacist to offer guidance on chronic medicine usage or disposal.



6. GEMS Pharmacy Network

A number of 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. In addition, the GEMS Chronic Courier Pharmacy can be utilised for your chronic medicine needs. The benefits of using a network pharmacy are that:

- You are less likely to incur co-payments.
- You benefit from negotiated rates,
- You obtain enhanced quality of care.
- You are served with professionalism.
- Network pharmacies have enhanced product knowledge and are required to comply with GEMS requirements.
- You benefit as you obtain cost-effective medicine.

How do I use the GEMS Pharmacy network?

GEMS offers 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 period of six months. Contact us on **0860 004 367** to nominate your network pharmacy or to change your allocated pharmacy.

What happens if I get my chronic medicine from a pharmacy other than the one with which I have nominated?

Your first claim from a pharmacy other than your nominated pharmacy will be paid in full. However, any subsequent claims will attract a non-DSP co-payment of 30%. You do not pay a non-DSP co-payment if you use your nominated pharmacy, therefore it is in your best interest to get your authorised chronic medicines from there.

What to 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 on **0860 004 367** or email chronicdsp@gems.gov.za to nominate another network pharmacy close to your home or work. Alternatively, nominate the GEMS Chronic Courier Pharmacy to have your chronic medicines delivered to you.

GEMS Chronic Courier Pharmacy

The GEMS Chronic Courier Pharmacy is a GEMS DSP for chronic medicine. If you have not chosen the option of collecting your medicine from your local pharmacy, you can choose to have it delivered to you by the Courier Pharmacy. If you prefer delivery, you will be allocated to the Courier Pharmacy for a minimum period of six months. The six-month stipulation, is in line with your six-month script cycle.

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 between 08:00 and 17:00 on weekdays.
- An authorized person, who is older than 18 years, is required to sign for your medicine parcel. The details of this person must be provided to the Courier Pharmacy before the next delivery date.

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 service delivers the medicine.

The delivery note included in the parcel details the address GEMS has on file as the 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 just 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 are going on holiday for example, inform the Courier Pharmacy at least seven working days before the delivery date. To do this, please call **0860 004 367**, select option 4, select language, then 3 and 3. The delivery schedule is sent with every parcel and should be used as a guide to determine when the next parcel is due. You can update your details when you call. In the event of a delay, the Courier Pharmacy will contact you to make alternative delivery arrangements.

How do I pay my co-payment?

If there are co-payments for your medicines dispatched to you by the Courier Pharmacy, please pay by direct deposit, credit card and debit order, EasyPay or Pay@. It is important to note that payment should be made directly to the Chronic Courier Pharmacy. The account details will be provided on the invoice dispatched with your medicines. Please use your Chronic Courier Pharmacy Profile number or GEMS membership number as your reference faxing the proof of payment to **0861 004 367** or emailing to chronicdsp@gems.gov.za.

7. Preventive Screening at Network Pharmacies

Screening is paramount to ensure that medical conditions are detected early. Preventive care services such as the flu vaccines, HPV vaccines, Pneumococcal vaccines and all other vaccines as well as screening services such as cholesterol, glucose screening, blood pressure monitoring, HIV pre and post-test counselling, peak-flow measurement, pregnancy screening, urine analysis, are available at all pharmacies. Ask your pharmacist for the various managed care protocols applied on each of the screening and preventive care tests funded by GEMS 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.

8. Co-payments

What is a medicine co-payment?

A share of the costs of a 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.

- **MPL co-payment**

This co-payment occurs if you choose a medicine that costs more than the GEMS maximum price for that medicine and for which there is a generic equivalent available (if you choose the original branded medicine rather than 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. A medicine with 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 to substitute the most cost effective generic.

- **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:

- 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 medicines on the comprehensive formulary list applied to all GEMS options. The doctor will need to supply you with a new prescription should the medication be changed to an in-formulary medicine.

9. 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 your chronic condition.

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 out of formulary co-payments.

Which medicines are on the chronic medicine formulary?

Visit www.gems.gov.za > Home > Healthcare Providers > Formularies List to find out which medicines are on the comprehensive formulary which is applied for all GEMS options.

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 incur an out of formulary co-payment at the pharmacy that dispenses your medicine.

If there is a sound medical reason to justify the use of an out of formulary medicine 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. Refer to the flow diagram in Section 4 which details the process which can be followed to authorise your medicines on the chronic medicine benefit.

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 South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA). 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 Medicine Price List (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 within the MPL so that you avoid a co-payment.

10. 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, as it is preventing you from becoming sicker or developing other or more serious illnesses.

Take it at the correct intervals 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.

GEMS will contact you via telephone, SMS or email to re-emphasise the importance of taking your chronic medication regularly, where there is no record of claims for your chronic medicines for 3 or more consecutive months. If you are no longer using your chronic medicines, please first discuss this with your doctor. The chronic authorisation department may then be contacted on **0860 004 367** (members), **0860 436 777** (providers), or an email may be sent to enquiries@gems.gov.za to request that the authorisation be deactivated.

It is important to update GEMS with your current contact details in order for us to communicate with the correct beneficiary or member. Your contact details may be updated by making contact with the GEMS Customer Services Department on **0860 004 367** and selecting option 5, or by sending an email to enquiries@gems.gov.za with the updated information.

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.

Your nominated pharmacy needs a valid and original doctor's prescription to dispense your chronic medicine. This is a legal requirement for scheduled medicines and medicines for long-term (chronic) use. According to legislation, you may not have more repeats than the number specified by your doctor on your prescription, effective from the date of the prescription. A schedule 5 (S5) prescription cannot be repeated for more than six months.

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 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, 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** or email it to chronicdsp@gems.gov.za 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.

11. Advance Supply of Chronic Medicine

If travelling outside South Africa, you may apply for an advance supply of your chronic medicine. The minimum 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 or fax to **0861 004 367**. Obtain the form by contacting GEMS on 0860 004 367 or log onto 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 chronic medicine program 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.

12. 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.

What is a Care Plan?

GEMS will pay for the diagnosis, treatment and care of a number of chronic conditions. To support you with the management of your condition(s), GEMS has put a Care Plan in place that provides you with specific benefits relating to your condition(s). A Care Plan is therefore a list of the services that GEMS will cover. It details the services/care you have access to in order to manage your condition(s), such as doctor consultations, pathology tests, and screening tests. The tests covered include CD4, Viral load, HbA1C, Cholesterol, Renal tests, Liver tests and for females, Pap smears. HIV patients are also covered for annual flu vaccinations. Compliance to the Care Plan will assist you in improving and maintaining your health and quality of life.

Important points about your Care Plan:

Your Care Plan services are revised annually and these benefits can be accessed from the beginning of each year. These Care Plan services are for a full calendar year (12 months).

Why should my doctor prescribe HIV medicine on the formulary?

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

What is the MPL?

The Medicine Price List (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. Such a co-payment will be payable if you claim for HIV medicine that is not on the Medicine Price List, instead of choosing an alternative from the list; for example, an appropriate generic equivalent.

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

What is the Milk formulary?

The Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV (PMTCT) programme includes baby milk formula for women opting not to breastfeed and is available for infants up to 6 months of age.

What is the Multivitamin formulary?

Authorised multivitamins on the formulary will be reimbursed in full, without any co-payment. However, multivitamins that are not on the formulary will be funded by the Scheme up to R85, which may result in a co-payment.

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

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

13. 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):	enquiries@gems.gov.za
Email (for chronic medicine):	chronicdsp@gems.gov.za
Postal Address:	GEMS, Private Bag X782, Cape Town 8000
Website:	www.gems.gov.za


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
Eastern Cape		
	East London	Gillwell Shopping Centre, Shop LG36, Cnr Gillwell Road and Fleet Street
	Mthatha	Savoy Complex, Units 11 and 12A, Nelson Mandela Drive
Free State		
	Bloemfontein	Bloem Plaza, Shop 124, Charlotte Maxeke Street
	Welkom	Gold Fields Mall, Shop 51A, Cnr Strateway and Buiten Street
Gauteng		
	Braamfontein	Traduna House, 118 Jorissen Street, Ground Floor, Cnr Jorissen and Civic Boulevard (opposite Civic Centre)
	Pretoria - Arcadia	Sancardia Building, Shop 51, Cnr Stanza Bopape and Steve Biko streets, Arcadia
Limpopo		
	Polokwane	Shop 1, 52 Market Street
	Thohoyandou	Unit G3, Metropolitan Centre
Mpumalanga		
	Mbombela (Nelspruit)	Shop No 18, Nedbank Centre, 30 Brown Street, Nelspruit CBD
	eMalaheni (Witbank)	Safeways Crescent Centre, Shop S67, Cnr President and Swartbos streets, Die Heuwel
North West		
	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
Northern Cape		
	Kimberley	New Park Centre, Shop 14, Bultfontein Way and Lawson Street
	Upington	61A Market Street
KwaZulu-Natal		
	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)
Western Cape		
	Worcester	Mountain Mill Shopping Centre, Shop 125A and B, Mountain Mill Drive
	Cape Town	Constitution House, 124 Adderley Street



Contact details



GEMS Contact Centre

0860 004 367 for member queries

0860 436 777 for provider queries



Fax

0861 004 367



Web

www.gems.gov.za



Email

enquiries@gems.gov.za



Postal address

GEMS, Private Bag

X782, Cape Town, 8000



GEMS Emergency Services

0800 444 367



GEMS Fraud hotline

0800 212 202

gems@thehotline.co.za



The digital membership card is available on the GEMS Member app and is convenient for members and their beneficiaries. Make use of the multi-function GEMS Member app to interact with the Scheme at home or on the go to make your life easier. Use the QR code to download the GEMS Member App.