



# Discovery Health designated service providers and pharmacy networks

The Medical Schemes Act, overseen by the Council for Medical Schemes, governs the professional practice of medical schemes in South Africa and allows for the use of designated service providers (DSPs) to ensure that quality healthcare is accessible and affordable for members.

## Members have a choice in where to get their medicine

Members have a choice in where to get their chronic medicine. Members can choose to fill their script directly at any qualifying DSP network pharmacy or members can order their medicine online through Discovery MedXpress.

### Designated service provider network pharmacies

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MedXpress network pharmacies are the designated service provider (DSP) for all approved, chronic medicine for Discovery Health Medical Scheme members on Delta, Priority, Saver and Core plans. This means that members on one of these plans must use a MedXpress network pharmacy, in order to avoid a 20% co-payment on their approved, chronic medicine.

Members registered on the HIV Care Programme, need to get their monthly HIV ARV medicine from one of the over 600 HIV DSP network pharmacies to avoid a 20% non-DSP co-payment.

MedXpress network pharmacies include more than 1800 retail pharmacies nationwide, with almost half representing community pharmacies and the rest representing corporate pharmacies. Over 85% of our members began using MedXpress network pharmacies to purchase their chronic medicines at the time of the decision in 2018, and we are confident that members have not been negatively impacted by this change.

### Discovery MedXpress order and delivery service

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Discovery MedXpress online ordering service is a convenient medicine ordering, tracking and delivery service allowing members to submit prescriptions and order medicine telephonically, through the Discovery mobile app or website or via SMS. The MedXpress call centre, a cost centre operated and managed by Discovery Health (Pty) Ltd, facilitates order requests from members through to participating MedXpress Partner pharmacies. This ensures that members receive a high touch, convenient service experience with medicine delivery within agreed turn-around times.



MedXpress partner pharmacies assume all the clinical responsibility in dispensing and handling prescriptions, ensure good pharmaceutical practice, and meet all professional and legal requirements. A high level of system integration, automation and service level requirements ensures a cost-effective and swift service for members. Members may choose to have their medicine order delivered to them anywhere in South Africa by a MedXpress courier partner pharmacy or they can collect their pre-ordered medicine at a qualifying MedXpress in-store collect partner pharmacy.

## What if members choose not to make use of designated service providers?

If a Discovery Health Medical Scheme member chooses to use a pharmacy outside of the MedXpress pharmacy network or the HIV DSP pharmacy network, they may be liable for a 20% co-payment on their chronic medicine. We have communicated this to all members with approved chronic cover who are affected by this change. We also notified pharmacies at the end of 2018 about the introduction of applicable co-payments which were initiated from 1 April 2019. The levying of co-payments in these circumstances is set out in Regulation 8 (2) issued in terms of the Medical Schemes Act.

## How members benefit from using DSP pharmacy networks

Members receive advice from DSP network pharmacies regarding affordable, formulary and generic alternatives to avoid any co-payments and receive cover in full for their approved chronic medicine without compromising care.

Using MedXpress network pharmacies or HIV DSP network pharmacies ensures our members get favourable rates for their approved chronic medicine. Members can also electronically via app, website or SMS order their medicines through Discovery MedXpress for free delivery to their door anywhere in South Africa.

## We report back regularly to participating pharmacies

We monitor the service that designated service providers give members by means of surveys and reports on a regular basis to ensure they continue to offer quality, affordable care. We communicate the results to pharmacies and assist them in obtaining the required formulary compliance criteria.

We inform members timeously if their pharmacy is no longer taking part in the designated service provider network. Members can also use the 'Find a Provider' tool available on the Discovery website or on the Discovery app to find their nearest DSP network pharmacy.

## Requirements for participation in DSP pharmacy networks

Participation in the MedXpress pharmacy network is open to all pharmacies that meet the participation criteria. The participation criteria are based on pharmacies' compliance with Discovery Health Medical Scheme's formulary. The formulary adheres to legal requirements as set out in the Prescribed Minimum Benefit (PMB) legislation and treatment algorithms for specific conditions on the Chronic Disease List (CDL).



Only contracted Discovery Health network pharmacies, charging the agreed Discovery Health tariffs, are eligible for participation in the DSP networks and Performance Based Remuneration network. To participate, contracted pharmacies are required to achieve and maintain the participation criteria as set out in the technical document “All about MedXpress DSP, HIV DSP and Performance Based Remuneration FAQ” published on the Discovery website at [www.discovery.co.za](http://www.discovery.co.za). For more information about how pharmacies can join the network or how we support pharmacies in reaching full compliance, please read the above mentioned document.

The level of generic substitution achieved by Discovery's MedXpress medicine order and delivery service is used to help set the formulary compliance benchmarks and targets required to participate in the MedXpress pharmacy network, which ensures that compliance targets are fair and achievable.

Pharmacies that have only met one of the participation criteria for the period up to 30 June 2019, although not fully compliant, have been included in the network and will have an additional four-month period in which to meet all the full participation criteria. The date to reach full compliance for participation will be 31 October 2019.

## A note on generic substitution

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Discovery Health supports and promotes the use of affordable generic medicines consistent with national and global guidance on affordable access to medicines, as recommended by the World Health Organisation. Generic medicines are registered with the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority based on bioequivalence (same clinical effect) and safety, efficacy and quality. Hence, the recommendation to use best-priced generics is a safe, and affordable recommendation aimed to assist consumers.

### **Dispensing pharmacists are required to inform consumers about generic medicines**

Dispensing pharmacists are required to let consumers know if a more affordable generic medicine is available to substitute branded medicines, to empower consumers to make an informed choice. This is a requirement of the Medicines and Related Substances Act of 1965 (as amended) and the supporting regulations. It is important to note that generic substitution is not permitted where the prescribing doctor has indicated 'No generics' on the prescription.

It is not possible to foresee drug-related adverse reactions to generic medicines in advance. In the unlikely event of this happening, these should be reported to the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA) at <https://www.sahpra.org.za/>

## Contact us for any queries or assistance

For any questions about Discovery MedXpress or MedXpress network pharmacies, please email [healthpartnerinfo@discovery.co.za](mailto:healthpartnerinfo@discovery.co.za) or visit the Health Professional Zone at [www.discovery.co.za](http://www.discovery.co.za)

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