

Feedback: PSCBC Committee on GEMS – 15 July 2022

2023 Product development

Members are aware that GEMS undertakes the annual process to develop products and benefits to members in an endeavour to improve service delivery and maintain the competitive edge in the product offering. Unions participate in the process through the PSCBC Committee on GEMS. The Committee met on 15 July 2022 to consider the proposals and recommendations by GEMS for 2023. Labour also has the opportunity to make inputs that can be considered by GEMS.

In terms of the GEMS presentations, two critical issues emerged, being the reduction of co-payments and the increase of medical-aid subscriptions. The Committee felt that the presentation lacked adequate details and specifics in terms of the reduction of co-payments. The presentation could not quantify the reduction in terms of rands and cents, which makes it difficult for the Committee to engage. Further, it was not clear by what percentage the medical-aid subscription will increase for 2023. Upon engagement, the following concerns were raised:

- Reluctance of GEMS to pay pathologists
- Benefits of members getting exhausted way before the end of the year
- Lack of information pertaining to co-payments
- GEMS rate seems to be out of sync with prevailing market price, creating a burden for members to pay the shortfall
- GEMS Network service providers charging more than GEMS rates

It was resolved that the Committee, through the General Secretary, must engage GEMS to clarify some of the issues, including: Intervention by GEMS pertaining to reduction of costs for members, investigate why member benefits are depleted long before the end of the year, and the quantum of the save on co-payment. Further, GEMS must consider increasing access to pharmacies as members are forced to pay a lot of levies at non-network pharmacies.

Members will be updated on developments.

Employees who want to join the PSA can visit the PSA's website (www.psa.co.za), send an email to ask@psa.co.za, or contact PSA Provincial Offices.

GENERAL MANAGER