



RHODOS



☆ NEWSFLASH ☆ NEWSFLASH ☆ NEWSFLASH ☆ NEWSFLASH ☆ January 21, 1991

Council agrees to a new medical aid scheme

AT its final meeting of the year on November 30, the Council accepted a proposal from the Personnel Division that the University should move from the BESTmed (previously SOMS) scheme to the Meddent Medical Aid Scheme from March 1, 1991.

Over the past year, members have become increasingly dissatisfied with the limited benefits offered by BESTmed and the rapidly escalating cost of cover. In addition, pensioners were required to subscribe to BESTmed (previously free). The University agreed to subsidize the continuation (pensioners and widows) members from July 1990.

For these reasons, it was decided to investigate alternative schemes thoroughly.

A sub-committee comprising the Director and Deputy Director of Personnel, the Registrar (Finance), the Personnel Officer and four members of the RUSA Executive Committee considered four alternative schemes. After debating the proposals made by the four schemes, the sub-committee invited representatives of the

Meddent scheme and the Midland Medical Plan to make a presentation to all interested staff.

After further discussions, the sub-committee unanimously agreed that Meddent's UNIMED and ECONOMED options would offer the best value to members in terms of comprehensive medical aid cover at competitive rates. It was therefore recommended that the University join this scheme after the expiry of its three month's notice to BESTmed on 28 February 1991.

MEDICAID ADMINISTRATORS (PTY)LTD, which administers Meddent, administers 23 medical aid schemes involving 100 000 principal members and about 260 000 beneficiaries.

Meddent has 34 000 principal members, R22 million in reserves, and offers two options:

- UNIMED (100% scheme)
- ECONOMED (70%/100% scheme)

The Council has agreed to subsidise UNIMED's subscriptions by 50% and ECONOMED's by 60%.

The University believes that both options offer excellent

benefits, good service and competitive rates. In the case of ECONOMED, the subscription rates are lower because members themselves carry 30% of initial claims against the medical aid each year.

ECONOMED offers members the opportunity of belonging to a 100% scheme with a co-payment plan. Members receive 70% of the scale of benefits, tariff or cost until the sum of all their collective claims at the scale of benefit has reached the threshold amount reflected below, then the member receives 100% of the scale of benefit for all further claims submitted during the remainder of the year. On January 1 each year the process is repeated.

Meddent has several additional features, which are worth noting.

- Cover is immediate
- Existing commitments will be covered
- Annual interchangeability exists between UNIMED and ECONOMED options
- No medical examination
- No health questionnaire.
- No exclusion of pre-existing conditions.

- Existing continuation members will be accepted into the UNIMED scheme at the lowest applicable rate. New continuation members' subscriptions will be based on their pension and number of dependants. At present UNIMED continuation members are only required to contribute 50% of the "regular" subscription rate. Existing continuation members and staff who joined the University on or before 30 June 1990 will have their continuation subscriptions subsidised at 50% by the University.

Although the Meddent head office is in Johannesburg, our staff will deal directly with their Port Elizabeth branch, which has on-line computer facilities.

All claims are assessed within 4,5 days of receipt. Cheques are run every 14 days and the turnaround time is between 21 and 30 days. They have a client services department to deal with queries and are prepared to make staff presentations. The representative will be available at the end of January and in early February to help with any questions that may have arisen.

Scale of benefits is a tariff negotiated between the Medical Aid Societies and representatives of the medical professions and others and represents the maximum amount a Medical Aid is legally permitted to refund (at 100%) in respect of a specific treatment.

ECONOMED thresholds

Dependants	100% scale of benefit accumulated claims	Society portion	Member payment
M	600	420	180
M + 1	1 200	840	360
M + 2	1 600	1 120	480
M + 3	2 000	1 400	600

Comparison of strategic benefits

Hospitalization

Benefit	Unlmed	Economed
Private & Provincial, incl maternity, normal and caesarean, for major and minor procedures	100% of the scale of benefits	70/100% of the scale of benefits
Ward fees	100% of the scale of benefits	70/100% of the scale of benefits
Theatre Fees	100% of the scale of benefits	70/100% of the scale of benefits
High Care	100% of the scale of benefits, no limit	70/100% of the scale of benefits, no limit
Intensive Care	100% of the scale of benefits, no limit	70/100% of the scale of benefits, no limit
Medicine	100% of cost, no limit	70/100% of cost, no limit
General practitioners	100% of the scale of benefits	70/100% of the scale of benefits
Homeopaths	100% of a GP's consultation fee	70/100% of a GP's consultation fee
Specialists	100% of the scale of benefits	70/100% of the scale of benefits
Blood transfusions	100% of cost	70/100% of cost
X-Rays	100% of the scale of benefits	70/100% of the scale of benefits

Prescribed medicine

Prescribed medicine including prescribed homeopathic medicine	100% of cost less R10 levy per prescription to an annual limit of: Single member R3 000 M + 1 D R6 000 M + 2 D R7 500 M + 3 D R9 000 or more	70/100% of cost less R7 per prescription no limit
Generic substitutes	No	No
Doctor dispensed	Yes	Yes
Medikredit	Yes	Yes

Dental

Ordinary or conservative dentistry, fillings, extractions, etc	100% of the scale of benefits	70/100% of the scale of benefits
Specialized dentistry including crown, bridge work, gold fillings, orthodontics, periodontics and laboratory work	100% of the scale of benefits Single member R1 700 M + 1 D R3 400 M + 2 D R4 250 or more	70/100% of the scale of benefits to an annual limit of: Single member R1 500 M + 1 D R3 000 M + 2 D R3 750 or more

Auxiliary benefits

Spectacles or contact lenses	100% of cost to a limit of R400 per beneficiary p a and R1 200 per family p a.	70/100% of cost to a limit of R350 per beneficiary p a and R1 050 per family p a.
Eye tests	R40 per test	R40 per test
Internal prosthesis	No limit	No limit
External prosthesis (surgical appliances)	100% of the scale of benefits to a limit of R4 500 per family p a	70/100% of the scale of benefits to a limit of R4 000 per family p a.

	Unimed	Economed
Speech therapy	100% of RAMS	70/100% of RAMS
Psychiatric treatment	100% of the scale of benefits	70/100% of the scale of benefits
Psychologists	100% of RAMS	70/100% of RAMS
Physiotherapy	100% of the scale of benefits	70/100% of the scale of benefits
Chiropodist	100% of RAMS	70/100% of RAMS
Chiropractors	100% of GP's consultation fee	70/100% of GP's consultation fee
Occupational therapy	100% of RAMS	70/100% of RAMS
Dieticians	100% of GP's consultation fee, and R400 per family p a	Excluded
Private nursing *	Limited to R150 per day, maximum 90 days p a.	Limited to R150 per day, maximum 90 days p a
Hospice *	Limited to R150 per bed per day, R30 per home visit	Limited to R150 per bed per day, R30 per home visit
Frail care *	Limited to R100 per day, maximum 30 days p a. R7 500 p a	Limited to R100 per day, maximum 30 days p a. R6 500 p a

* Collective limit for all three benefits

Limited benefits

Organ transplants	R30 000	R30 000
Breast reduction	100% of the scale of benefits to a limit of R150 per service per family p a.	70/100% of the scale of benefits to a limit of R150 per service per family p a.
Alcoholism	100% of the scale of benefits to a limit of R100 per service per family p a.	70/100% of the scale of benefits to a limit of R100 per service per family p a.
Sexually transmitted diseases	100% of the scale of benefits to a limit of R100 per service per family p a.	70/100% of the scale of benefits to a limit of R100 per service per family p a.
Radial keratotomy	100% of the scale of benefits to a limit of R100 per service per family p a.	70/100% of the scale of benefits to a limit of R100 per service per family p a.

Monthly contributions

Monthly	Scheme	M	M+1	M+2	M+3	M+4
0-750	Unimed	120	220	230	240	250
	Economed	82	174	180	200	210
751-1000	Unimed	175	300	310	325	340
	Economed	126	202	208	228	238
1001-1500	Unimed	220	360	380	390	400
	Economed	162	244	252	274	284
1501-2000	Unimed	250	400	410	425	435
	Economed	184	284	292	322	332
2001-2500	Unimed	265	425	435	450	465
	Economed	188	286	298	328	338
2501-3000	Unimed	270	435	445	460	475
	Economed	194	292	306	340	348
3001+	Unimed	280	445	455	470	485
	Economed	200	302	312	348	354

The University is also negotiating the possibility of providing Major Medical Insurance to cover the difference between "scale of benefits" refunds and actual costs in instances where expensive or prolonged hospitalization is required. This would not be subsidised, but would be voluntary for existing staff.

Application forms for the new medical aids

All existing members of BestMed will receive a letter regarding the changeover together with an application form for completion. This is necessary

- for you to indicate whether you wish to select the UNIMED or ECONOMED option
- to provide the new Medical Aid Scheme with details of those to be covered.

When you get your letter please complete the application form and return it to Patrick Phillips in the Personnel Department by 31 January 1991. The early return of the forms will help to ensure that you remain covered by Medical Aid, and receive your membership card in good time

Special arrangements for pensioners/widows

The following is a brief example of how the new subscriptions for a pensioner will be calculated. Each existing pensioner/widow will be sent an individual letter detailing the new arrangements he or she should make. The letter should have reached pensioners by 16 January. If you have not received your letter, please contact Patrick Phillips at Rhodes.

Example (based on Single Member at 1991 rates)

	BESTmed	UNIMED
Monthly subscriptions at normal rates	110	120
Medical Aid reduction		
UNIMED 50%		60
	110	60
Rhodes subsidy 50%	55	30
Continuation member pays each month	55	30

Example (based on Member and one dependent at 1991 rates)

	BESTmed	UNIMED
Monthly subscriptions at normal rates	260	220
Medical Aid reduction		
UNIMED 50%	-	110
	260	110
Rhodes subsidy 50%	130	55
Continuation member pays each month	130	55

Note:

Most individuals will find the ECONOMED option more economical over the period of a year, but bear in mind that you have to contribute 30% of your medical expenses until the threshold is reached. Of course, if you do not have heavy expenses, you will save this too.

(We apologise for the delay in the production of this Rhodos "Newsflash" - our computer broke down in mid -December and was not repaired until the third week in January - Editor)