



SADA Professional Advisory Bulletin

- Dentistry and the medical schemes environment
- Exciting new social media series by SADA
- Download the FREE patient information poster now!
- Call for Gauteng practitioners to participate in this Study
- Dental Assisting Exam date as advised by HPCSA

Circulation date: 30 October 2025

Dear Members

CLINICAL

DENTISTRY AND THE MEDICAL SCHEMES ENVIRONMENT

The Council for Medical Schemes (CMS) Annual Report 2024/25 has been released, outlining key regulatory developments and performance indicators affecting healthcare providers and beneficiaries. This bulletin summarises issues relevant to the dental profession and private practice environment.

Regulatory Landscape & Policy Directions

National Health Insurance (NHI)

CMS reconfirmed its role in supporting the transition to NHI, with emphasis on:

- Defining complementary cover for schemes under NHI.
- Aligning private funding with national health priorities.
- Strengthening primary healthcare and prevention-based models.

What this means for dentists:

Private dental practices should anticipate future structural changes in benefit design, contracting frameworks, and reimbursement mechanisms under NHI. SADA continues engagement with policymakers to advocate for the sustainability of private dentistry and access to oral healthcare.

Medical Scheme Performance

Industry Snapshot

- 71 registered medical schemes
- 9.13 million beneficiaries
- Solvency ratio 43.45% (above the statutory minimum of 25%)
- Relevant healthcare expenditure up 8.70%
- Contribution increases above CPI approved for 2024–2025 to protect reserves.

Key implications for dental practices

- Expect stricter scheme utilisation controls & clinical motivation requirements
- Continued pressure on tariff increases and reimbursement rates
- Intensified cost-containment measures affecting pre-authorisations & audits

Fraud, Waste & Abuse (FWA) Updates

CMS is finalising an expanded FWA Charter, including:

- Standardised industry protocols
- Proposed Tribunal for dispute adjudication
- Broader definitions to include *error-related billing disputes*.

SADA strongly supports fair, transparent, and evidence-based processes and will continue engaging to protect members, especially considering dentist-specific audit cases.

Clinical Policy & Benefit Developments

Primary Care & PMB Review

CMS continues to review:

- Prescribed Minimum Benefits (PMB) structure
- Base benefit package design with a focus on prevention

SADA is advocating for:

- Formal recognition of oral diseases as key NCDs
- Preventive dental interventions within the primary healthcare strategy
- Appropriate PMB inclusion and coding for dental emergencies and infection management

Digital & Data-Driven Health

CMS is investing in real-time data capture and improved digital infrastructure. This aligns with trends toward:

- Real-time claims analytics
- Value-based care frameworks
- Telehealth integration, where clinically appropriate

Dentists should begin strengthening:

- Data compliance
- Clinical coding accuracy
- Reporting integrity
- Secure practice management systems

Practice Guidance for Members

SADA recommends practitioners ensure:

- Detailed clinical notes for all treatments
- ICD-10 and tariff coding accuracy
- Written consent and treatment plans
- Transparency in quoting & billing
- Secure digital records & compliance policies

SADA Support & Advocacy

SADA remains committed to:

- Representing dentists in CMS and NHI processes
- Assisting members with scheme disputes
- Advocating for funding of essential oral health services
- Promoting fair contract conditions & reimbursement
- Providing coding, billing and audit training

Members requiring assistance with scheme-related matters are encouraged to contact our Clinical Support Desk at clinical@sada.co.za

EXCITING NEW SOCIAL MEDIA SERIES BY SADA

We are delighted to announce that over the next six weeks, SADA will initiate a "Did you know" initiative consisting of a series of social media posts that will provide the public with general information on a wide range of oral health topics, which will in turn direct viewers to the SADA website for more detailed information as well as to the "Find a Dentist" page.

Members are therefore urged to ensure that their practice and contact details are updated on their GU profiles on the website. If you require assistance to update details, please call +27 (0)11 484 5288 and we will capture your primary practice details.

Download the FREE patient information poster now!

A helpful poster is now available on the SADA website, free for members to download, designed to support transparent communication with patients, highlighting that scheme reimbursements are based on plan-specific benefits, which may differ from the practice's billing schedule as per the SADA Dental procedure codes. It is a valuable tool to manage expectations and promote understanding of out-of-pocket costs and is easily printed and displayed in the dental practice.

To access this poster, follow the steps below:

1. Log in to the SADA website using your username and password
2. Click on Publications and Press > Member newsletters > Other communications
3. Download the preferred format i.e. A3 poster or A5 pamphlet on Understanding Dental Procedures Medical scheme cover



CALL FOR GAUTENG PRACTITIONERS TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

Title of study: Occupation-related musculoskeletal disorders: The prevalence and associated risk factors among dentists in Gauteng province, South Africa

The link to the questionnaire comprises questions related to occupation-related musculoskeletal disorders. The purpose of the questionnaire is to determine the prevalence and associated risk factors among dentists in Gauteng province, South Africa. The information provided will help in contributing knowledge toward occupation-related musculoskeletal disorders among dentists in SA.

The questionnaire will take approximately 30-40 minutes to complete. Participants will be asked to provide consent at the beginning of the questionnaire before proceeding to the questions. All responses will remain anonymous and will be used for research purposes only. Participation in this questionnaire is completely voluntary. Participants that wish to withdraw from the questionnaire can do so at any time, before submission of the questionnaire. The information letter provided in the email as an attachment should be read before opening the link to the questionnaire. Also, the details of the researcher and supervisors are on the information sheet to seek clarity and for information purposes. Participation in this questionnaire will be greatly appreciated.

Link to questionnaire:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfkavy1kQDS8BB9jaVKs0tA4YsOImA-5YvgOoPR85D6AW4Gmg/viewform?usp=header>

LEGAL

REMINDER DENTAL ASSISTING EXAM DATE AS ADVISED BY HPCSA

Please note that, as previously communicated, the Dental Assisting Board Examination will be on Thursday, 27 November 2025, for qualifying practitioners.

Applications closed on 3 October.

Yours in oral health

Dr Tinesha Parbhoo - Head Clinical Support



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