

# Medshield/Oxygen merger gets green light

The Registrar of the Council for Medical Schemes (CMS) has approved the proposed merger between Medshield Medical Scheme and Oxygen Medical Scheme. Following a few months of careful evaluation and consultation the Boards of both Schemes are extremely upbeat about the amalgamation, which will be effective from 1 October and will yield the country's fourth largest open medical scheme.



Oxygen will be transferred to Medshield and the combined Scheme will be called Medshield Medical Scheme, providing healthcare cover for approximately 110 000 principal members and covering a total of around 256 000 lives.

Medshield's executive principal officer, Duduza Khosana, says, "We are naturally thrilled to receive this news from the Registrar. For Medshield, a scheme that has been successfully operating for over 40 years, maintaining member-centric benefits and service levels is paramount to every decision we make." She continues, "Our acquisition strategy was therefore clear-cut and we knew the profile of scheme we were seeking - enabling us to manage the careful balance between price, product and service." Khosana adds, "This deliberated amalgamation now provides an ideal opportunity for Medshield to enhance its market positioning and further establish itself as a prominent industry player."

Principal officer of Oxygen Medical Scheme, Wayne Pole, says, "The Board's decision to partner with Medshield was an easy one. Medshield presents a robust financial position with solid, healthy reserves - all of which benefit Oxygen and its members." He continues, "The development is undoubtedly mutually beneficial and ultimately provides for a stable healthcare environment for members."

A key priority for both Schemes is for the transfer of Oxygen members to Medshield to be a seamless one, which will be handled by Medshield's own administration arm. Medshield moved to a system of self-administration in March 2009, a move it maintains has not only saved the scheme millions but has also enabled it to nurture brand champions. "We look forward to welcoming the new members into the Medshield family, and staying true to our brand promise, of being 'Always there for you'," says Khosana.

The new benefit packages will be announced during the annual benefits and rates launch in October of this year. Members (both Medshield and Oxygen) with any queries relating to the amalgamation can contact 0860 002 120 or email

[member@medshield.co.za](mailto:member@medshield.co.za).

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