

## OBTAINING MEDICAL AID AUTHORISATION FOR TREATMENT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PATIENT

The majority of medical schemes require that their members obtain authorisation before receiving services from health practitioners registered under the Health Professions Act (**see below the list of all HPCSA registered practitioners**).

While acting in the best interest of their patients, some practitioners offer to assist their patients with obtaining authorisation from their medical schemes for the services to be rendered. Unfortunately, this has made most patients who are members of medical aids to believe that it is the responsibility of the health practitioner to obtain authorisation from their medical schemes.

The Council has received complaints against practitioners emanating from this wrong belief and as a result, some patients have experienced financial losses.

### **Patients who are members of medical schemes are advised as follows:**

1. Health practitioners have no relationship with patients medical schemes except that provided for in managed healthcare arrangements
2. The responsibility of obtaining authorisation for treatment or services to be rendered lies with the member of the medical aid after receiving prescribed information from the patient's treating practitioner.
3. Patients are also reminded that it is their responsibility to ensure that the authorisation obtained from their medical scheme covers the scope of treatment or services that will be rendered.
4. Patients should communicate with the practitioner concerned, especially when there is limitation to the authorisation given.
5. Although practitioners help their patients in obtaining authorisation for them, patients still have the responsibility to obtain authorisation.

## **LIST OF CATEGORIES OF HPCSA REGISTERED PRACTITIONERS**

- Dental Therapy and Oral Hygiene
- Environmental Health Officers
- Emergency care Personnel
- Medical and Dental Professions
- Medical Technology
- Occupational Therapy and Medical Orthotics/ Prosthetics
- Optometry and Dispensing Opticians
- Physiotherapy, Podiatry and Biokinetics
- Psychology
- Radiography and Clinical Technology
- Speech Language and Hearing Professions
- Dietetics and Nutrition

