



RULINGS ISSUED BY THE OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR

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Dr L o.b.o Ms R v Medihelp Medical Scheme

Declined funding: Tariff Code unbundling

The Complainant, Dr L, lodged a complaint on behalf Ms R who is a member of Medihelp Medical Scheme (the Respondent).

The Complainant, who is also the member's treating provider, submitted that the member sustained a neck of femur fracture and underwent total hip replacement surgery. He was aggrieved that the Respondent declined to fund procedure codes 0465,0051, 0825 and 0583. The Complainant alleged that the Respondent declined to fund these codes on the basis that the member voluntarily obtained services from a non-network provider. The Complainant was of the view that the member's admission and surgery related to a condition listed under the Prescribed Minimum Benefit legislation and must be funded in full.

In response to the complaint, the Respondent submitted that tariff code 0637 – Hip: Total replacement, was approved as a Prescribed Minimum Benefit (PMB) at a global fee of R19 227,50. It added that the claims were not short funded because the Complainant was a non-designated service provider, but that tariff codes 0465,0051, 0825 and 0583 were already included in the primary procedure code 0637 and that no specific clinical information was provided to support additional funding.

The matter was referred to the CMS Clinical Review Committee (CRC), which reviewed all the clinical evidence and submissions by the parties. The CRC found that the disputed codes were standard procedures for total hip replacement surgery and should not be billed separately. The CRC further confirmed that the neck of femur fracture qualified as a PMB condition, and that the treatment provided was consistent with PMB level of care. However, the clinical evidence did not support separate billing of codes already included in the primary procedure.

Having considered the clinical opinion by the CRC, the Registrar found that the Respondent's decision was justified and consistent with clinical and billing standards. As such, the complaint against the Respondent was dismissed.