**REBUILDING LIVES**

**Physical rehabilitation and physical therapy medical aid cover in South Africa**

**Johannesburg – An operation or accident is often traumatic. The healing process after that can also be an equally gruelling ordeal unless managed well. Physical rehabilitation, or physical therapy, is the process an injured or disabled person goes through to restore their physical functioning. This process can be lengthy, beginning while the person is still in the hospital after an injury or surgery and continuing through a skilled nursing facility, in-home and out-patient therapy.**

Physical rehabilitation and therapy are crucial components of healthcare and help individuals recover from injuries and surgeries or manage chronic conditions. Understanding the extent of medical aid cover for rehabilitation services is essential for individuals in South Africa.

According to the World Health Organisation [(WHO)](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/rehabilitation#:~:text=The%20benefits%20of%20rehabilitation&text=Rehabilitation%20helps%20to%20minimize%20or,addressing%20pain%20or%20other%20complications.), physical rehabilitation is essential to universal health coverage to promote good health and support disease prevention and treatment. When recovering from physical injuries or surgeries or managing chronic conditions and disabilities, medical aid coverage for physical rehabilitation is critical. It ensures that patients can access various rehabilitation services, including physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy. By covering these services, medical aid plans facilitate timely and comprehensive care, promote faster recovery, improve outcomes, and enhance quality of life.

**Physical rehabilitation and physical therapy coverage with Medshield Medical Scheme**

Medshield, one of South Africa's leading medical aid schemes, provides extensive rehabilitation and physical therapy options. Their commitment to providing access to holistic healthcare extends to supporting members throughout their recovery journeys. With Medshield, you can have peace of mind knowing that rehabilitation and physical therapy expenses are covered, helping you regain optimal health and functionality.

Medshield covers in-patient rehabilitation services, which include rehabilitation received while admitted to a hospital or specialised facility. In-patient rehabilitation services are ideal for individuals recovering from surgeries, accidents, or debilitating conditions, such as stroke or severe mobility impairments. Medshield's comprehensive coverage ensures eligible members can access necessary treatments and therapies from a team of skilled healthcare professionals.

Not all rehabilitation and physical therapy services require in-patient care. Medshield offers extensive coverage for out-patient rehabilitation services, which means members can receive treatments and therapies without being admitted to a hospital. This cover includes consultations, assessments, specialised therapies, and ongoing support to aid recovery.

The impact of physical rehabilitation and physical therapy extends far beyond the treatment room, influencing individuals, families, and communities alike. By restoring functional independence, rehabilitation enhances individuals' ability to engage and participate in social interactions, thereby fostering greater societal inclusion and productivity.

Furthermore, physical rehabilitation contributes to healthcare cost containment by reducing the need for invasive procedures, hospital admissions, and long-term care services. Rehabilitation minimises healthcare expenditures while maximising outcomes by promoting early intervention and facilitating timely recovery. It demonstrates its value as a cost-effective healthcare intervention.

**Chronic condition rehabilitation**

Medshield recognises the significance of continuous rehabilitation services for individuals managing chronic conditions. They offer comprehensive coverage for rehabilitation aimed at helping people with chronic conditions such as stroke, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, or arthritis. Whether regular physiotherapy sessions, assistive devices, or ongoing consultations, Medshield strives to support members in improving their quality of life and effectively managing their conditions.

**Accessing physical rehabilitation and physical therapy services**

About 2.4 billion people globally live with a health condition that may benefit from rehabilitation. The WHO states that the need for rehabilitation is currently largely unmet. In some low- and middle-income countries, more than 50% of people do not receive the rehabilitation services they require.

The WHO developed an approach to address the lack of access to rehabilitation services. It involves integrating rehabilitation into all levels of healthcare and ensuring it is covered by universal healthcare as part of primary care. In 2017, the WHO launched [Rehabilitation 2030](https://www.who.int/initiatives/rehabilitation-2030) to highlight the need for strengthening healthcare systems and to call on all stakeholders worldwide to work together to improve leadership and governance, develop a robust multi-disciplinary rehabilitation workforce, increase funding for rehabilitation, and improve data collection and research on rehabilitation.

To access rehabilitation and physical therapy services covered by Medshield, follow these key steps:

1. **Consultation with healthcare professionals**: Visit your healthcare provider to assess your rehabilitation needs. They will provide guidance and referrals for specialised therapies and treatments.
2. **Medshield membership**: Ensure you are a Medshield Medical Scheme member and have selected a plan that includes rehabilitation and physical therapy coverage.
3. **Claim submission**: After undergoing rehabilitation services, collect all necessary documentation, including invoices and treatment records, and follow the Medshield claims procedure to submit them.
4. **Pre-authorisation**: Medshield may require pre-authorisation for specific high-cost rehabilitation treatments. Speak with your healthcare provider or Medshield's customer service team for guidance on the pre-authorisation process.

Physical rehabilitation is a cornerstone of healthcare, offering hope, healing, and restoration to individuals affected by injury, illness, or disability. Review the specific coverage details within your selected Medshield benefit option and consult the customer service team for additional information or assistance. With Medshield Medical Scheme, you can pave the way towards a successful rehabilitation, rebuilding your life with the necessary support and resources.

**FIN**

(828 words)

**EDITORS NOTES**

**FURTHER MEDIA INFORMATION AND INTERVIEW REQUESTS**

* Stone issues this release on behalf of the Medshield Medical Scheme.
* For media enquiries or interview requests, please contact Willem Eksteen, CEO of Stone or a media liaison member of the Stone team at media@stone.consulting / 011 447 0168
* Alternatively, contact Lilané Swanepoel at Medshield at 010 597 4982 / lilanes@medshield.co.za

**MORE INFORMATION ON THE 2024 MEDSHIELD BENEFIT OPTIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS**

Benefits and Contribution amendments are subject to CMS approval.

Please refer to the 2024 Product Page on the Medshield website at <https://medshield.co.za/>. You can review the benefit adjustments and value adds and download the 2024 benefit guides

* **PremiumPlus** provides mature families and professionals with unlimited hospital cover in a hospital of their choice, with In-Hospital Medical Practitioner consultations and visits paid at 200% Medshield Private Tariff, and the freedom to manage daily healthcare expenses through a comprehensive Personal Savings Account and extended Above Threshold Cover.
* **MediBonus** provides mature families and professionals unlimited hospital cover in a hospital of their choice, with In-Hospital Medical Practitioner consultations and visits paid at a 200% Medshield Private Tariff and the independence to manage daily healthcare expenses through a substantial Day-to-Day Limit.
* **MediSaver** is perfect for independent individuals and young professionals considering expanding their families. MediSaver offers unlimited hospital cover in the Compact Hospital Network, with the freedom to manage daily healthcare expenses through a generous Personal Savings Account.
* **MediPlus** provides middle to upper-income families with complete healthcare cover for major medical and daily healthcare needs. Unlimited hospital cover is provided through a choice of two hospital networks, Prime or the value-focused Compact Hospital Network. Daily healthcare expenses are covered through a generous Day-to-Day Limit. Benefits are identical in both categories, Prime and Compact, with care coordination and doctor referral mandated on MediPlus Compact.
* **MediCore** is ideal for healthy individuals looking for comprehensive hospital cover, with daily healthcare expenses self-managed. This option offers unlimited hospital cover in the Compact Hospital Network, with In-Hospital Medical Practitioner consultations and visits paid at Medshield Private Tariff 200%. Day-to-day healthcare expenses are self-funded.
* **MediValue - Prime and Compact** - is the ideal option for growing families. It offers affordable cover for major medical and daily healthcare needs. Unlimited hospital cover is provided through a choice of two hospital networks, Prime or the value-focused Compact Hospital Network. Daily healthcare expenses are covered through a sizeable Day-to-Day Limit. Benefits are identical on MediValue Prime and MediValue Compact, with care coordination and doctor referral mandated on MediValue Compact.
* **MediSwift** is the ideal hospital plan for active, healthy individuals. Major medical emergency and In-Hospital treatment are covered up to R1 million per family in the Compact Hospital Network, with the added benefit of day-to-day treatment for non-professional sports injuries. MediSwift offers no Day-to-Day benefits as a hospital plan, allowing members to self-manage their daily healthcare expenses.

**Medshield Medical Scheme - Live Assured knowing you have a Partner for Life.**

**ABOUT MEDSHIELD MEDICAL SCHEME**

* Medshield is a healthcare fund where all members contribute to the fund monthly to cater for medical cover should the need arise.
* Medshield has been in operation since 1968, making us one of the most experienced, knowledgeable, and reliable medical schemes in South Africa. Our extensive experience in the healthcare sector guides our understanding of our members' needs. Our excellent cover and benefits and the best quality systems and services have resulted in our exceptional size and strength.
* Each of our options offers affordably priced benefits. We continuously review and improve the range of benefits in each option to bring you what you need.
* Our impeccable reputation of prompt payments to hospitals, doctors, pharmacies and other medical caregivers guarantees approval from service providers when you present your Medshield membership card.
* Our extensive partner networks place us in the perfect position to offer exceptionally competitive rates to our members.
* Medshield is well-represented throughout all nine provinces and provides seamless access to service providers in your area. Our geographical spread provides convenience if it becomes necessary for you to have a personal discussion with one of our experienced consultants. We also have a streamlined online claim submission system and immediate contact centre assistance, making it easier to manage your membership and claims from the convenience of your home or office.
* Our extensive range of additional benefits and services is another distinguishing factor. Our benefits and services have been designed to give members additional support when needed, for instance, in an emergency or when suffering from a chronic or life-threatening condition.
* Compared with other medical schemes, our trustworthiness, impeccable history, and exceptional service guarantee that we come out tops!