Dear Doctor

OMG MEMBERSHIP

1. **Background**

   The Ophthalmology Management Group (OMG) is a public company that was established in 1996 for the benefit of Ophthalmologists and to assist the Ophthalmological Society of South Africa with the fulfilment of certain functions related to private practice matters. We look at the growth over the years since our inception, and we are extremely proud of what we have achieved, and even more excited about our outlook for an equally promising future. We have successfully transitioned to become a respected Specialist Management Group amongst stakeholders in the Health Care Industry, while earning our patients' trust along the way.

2. **OMG and its functions to OSSA**

   OMG now functions as a subcommittee of OSSA with a Service Level Agreement that clearly defines the relationship between the two groups and the areas of focus. In short OSSA is responsible to best position it as a unified group and ophthalmology in general in the challenging and changing healthcare landscape and the future health reform in South Africa. OSSA is mostly responsible for the academic, ethical and training issues and to establish and maintain sustainable international relations in Ophthalmology.

   OMG focuses on the business issues related to Ophthalmology and its interaction with Funders and other stakeholders in Healthcare. We look after our member’s interest and advise them on Practice Management and related issues. A member joining OSSA therefore has the value and advantages of OMG membership as it is included in the OSSA membership fees.

   The members of the Board of Directors of OMG are allocated portfolios to ensure the efficient execute of the strategic objectives of OMG. The portfolios include Finance, Coding, Funder Liaising and Relations, Marketing and communication, Practice Management, Structure of OMG, Service Level Agreements, Government Liaising, SAPPF and Operations (the OSSA/OMG office).

   The OMG needs to be strengthened to deal with the ever increasing demand placed on OMG and OSSA by Government regarding the proposed Healthcare Reform and NHI, the role of private practice in South Africa, the current shortage of doctors in South Africa, the involvement Medical Schemes, the HPCSA and other important matters such as regulatory reforms and legislation. The Society is not involved in matters specifically related to private practice and has contracted OMG to assist in this regard. There have been huge successes in the joint effort between OSSA and OMG, e.g. the establishment of new codes that are relevant and in line with new technology. Set out below is a brief summary of the value add services that OMG offers to its members:

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**Directors:** Dr AR Boliter, Dr LP Kruger, Dr PJL Odendaal, Dr JJ Slazus (Chairperson), Dr J Talma, Dr DP Doubell, Dr MJ Young, Dr AG Zaborowski
Dr CH Gouws, Dr S Guglielmetti, Dr C Weitz

**Office:** Merinda Moodie (COO) & Stephânie Claassen (Administrative Officer)
The immediate projects of OMG will focus on are as follows:

- Strengthening the organisation, representative of Ophthalmology in private practice and also representing Ophthalmologists in the Public Sector with limited private practice.
- OMG together with SAPPF and other specialist management companies will continue the Pricing Commission battle and the establishment of a cost based RPL. They will and will continue to engage with the HPCSA to publish a scientific researched “ethical” or “guideline” tariff.
- OMG together with SAPPF and other management companies will oppose the Board of Healthcare Funders attempt to reduce the value of PMB’s to a scheme rate and not the doctor’s invoice value based on individual practice cost.
- OMG will continue to engage closely with Discovery Health on the Cataract Sustainability Project and the Keycare Global Fee contract.
- Discussing and negotiating Ophthalmology Benefit Design with the various medical schemes and managed care organisations, this function to be co-ordinated by the OMG EXCO.
- Review and update of ophthalmology coding system for incorporation into a new coding system for South Africa. This project will be done in conjunction with SACHI (South African Classification of Healthcare Interventions) with assistance of the OMG Board.
- OMG together with SAPPF and other specialist management companies will continue to engage with Government on all healthcare matters relating to NHI and changes to the National Health Act and the Medical Schemes Act.
- OMG will continue to update procedural coding reforms relevant to Ophthalmology and meet with Funders in this regard.

In addition to the projects listed above, the following value add services are available at no additional costs, except if stated so and are part of the monthly membership fee:

- Free online SMS service for patient communications – OSSA website.
- Online access to obtain CPD points, as well as online access to view your CPD points.
- Practice advisory services and query helpdesk to assist with medical schemes problems, i.e., non-payment, short-payments, reversals, PMB’s etc.,
- Online access to various medical journals.

The OMG business model:

- OSSA/OMG has appointed a full time COO, Merinda Moodie to coordinate their functions and support the respective Boards.
- Ophthalmologists are automatically members of OMG through their OSSA membership.
- The Board of Directors comprise of practising ophthalmologists that have been nominated and duly elected.
- An Annual General Meeting is held during the annual OSSA conference.
- OMG utilizes Healthman (reimbursed from the member fee contribution) as a consultant to assist with certain functions. To highlight a few:
  - Practice management issues (Queries and complaints) e.g. unpaid medical aid accounts, short payment of PMB’s etc. to ensure feedback to your practice for resolution of your queries. For these issues please contact the Healthman offices on Tel. 011 340 9000 or send an email to omgqueries@healthman.co.za;
  - Assistance with meetings with funders, managed care companies, administrators and other health care stakeholders;
  - The management of the OSSA/OMG member database and electronic platform to ensure accurate data and timeous changes where necessary;
  - Assistance with the evaluations of reimbursement models and proposals;
  - Collection of membership fees and attending to the financial responsibilities of OMG as a company.
Website

It is our objective, to ensure that you are informed of important issues in the health care landscape, that we meet your expectations and provide initiatives and solutions to benefit of your practice. We aim to effectively and regularly communicate with you through all available megsanisms including the OSSA website, emails and sms communication to ensure that you are up to date with what is happening in OSSA/OMG. We urge you to visit our website on a regular basis to access important communication and invite you to comment or make any suggestion by e-mail to info@ossa.co.za. Please ensure that you obtain your specific username and password to access important information on the website. You can request your username and password from the following email address: joeyh@healthman.co.za.

Internal Communication:

- Communication will be via email, fax, sms messages and the OSSA website.
- Members will receive Ophthalmogram and Health View newsletters updating them on industry news on a regular basis.
- The Private Practice Review newsletter will regularly update our members on news pertaining to their practice i.e. codes, legislation, tariffs, etc.
- Member meetings will happen on an ad hoc basis in the various regions at which meetings, matters of importance to private practice will be discussed.

Membership fee and joining OMG:

- The monthly fee for OSSA/OMG membership for 2013 and as determined by the OSSA executive will be R1 696 per month (VAT inclusive) and will be utilised for the OSSA Membership fee, the SAPPF Membership fee, the OMG Membership fee, the HealthMan consulting fee, any Legal fees and Project fees (e.g. actuarial services, cost studies, procedural coding etc.). Funds not utilised in a given year will be carried forward to dedicated projects in the following year.

Please note: Members who are working in the public sector or who are in limited private practice as well as members who have recently started private practice, may apply for a reduced monthly fee. Please email ovsa@mweb.co.za to apply for such a reduction in fees.

- The involvement of everybody with an interest in private practice is important and we appeal to all non – members to join OSSA/OMG.
- Without your cooperation and support, the objectives of OMG will not be achieved. It is one of our primary objectives to ensure that you are pro-actively informed on important issues in the health care landscape to the benefit of your practice.
- Among our most important assets are the extensive knowledge base, deep-rooted professionalism and unwavering commitment of our highly-qualified and skilled member base.

We strive to continue to establish in-depth relationships with you as members and to continue learn more about your environment, challenges and goals first-hand, so that we can offer tangible solutions and support with a candid perspective.

Please feel to contact any of the members on the Board or the Chief Operating Officer Merinda Moodie on Merinda@ossa.co.za to discuss any issue or query.
Board of Directors and Executives:

Directors:
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Administrative Assistant:
Mrs. Stephanie Claassen  
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3. South African Private Practitioners Forum (SAPPF)

The SAPPF has been established following a general disillusionment with SAMA’s lack of support for Specialists, in Private Practice in South Africa. This process followed consultation with all specialist stakeholders, a strategic workshop in November 2007 and numerous meetings of the now defunct Specialist Private Practice Committee (SPPC) within the SAMA structures. SAMA currently represents less than 50% of specialists in private practice.

In summary:

- SAMA provided limited support to the SPPC
- SAMA provided no financial support to the specialists RPL process and practice cost studies
- SAMA provided no support to the specialist RPL legal challenge
- SAMA provided no support to challenges of the changes to HPCSA Ethical Rules that could have had a disastrous effect on doctors ownership in health establishments
- SAMA provided limited input to the proposed new coding system
- SAMA refused to jointly participate in the legal challenge on PMB’s
- SAMA does not want to disclose its policy or view on the DoH-CMS Policy on Price Determination in South Africa

Specialists need a properly constituted organisation that supports and protects the interests of all specialist societies and their members. We urge all ophthalmologists to support SAPPF in its various endeavors to promote private practice.

4. South African Coding System

The SAPPF is in the process of drafting a new National Procedural Coding Structure of international. It is important that the Medical Profession determines its scope of practice and therefore needs to remain in control of any changes to the current
coding system or any proposed new system. The ICD10 Procedural Coding System (ICD10PCS) proposed by the Department of Health is not appropriate for South Africa and is not in use anywhere else in the world.

It was also proposed by Department of Health that the ICD10PCS coding system must be researched and developed by the private sector at its own costs. Thereafter ownership must be handed over to Department of Health. This position is not acceptable to SAPPF and SAPPF will continue its efforts on introducing a new South African system. The coding initiative will be coordinated by an independent entity established for this purpose. South African Classification of Healthcare Interventions (SACHI) will become the custodian of coding and will be inclusive of all medical disciplines in South Africa.

We trust that the information contained in this document is of value to you. Should you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours Sincerely

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Chairman: OMG

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