

18 November 2015

Mr Mbasu Mxenge,
Principal Officer
POLMED
P O Box 14812
Hatfield
Pretoria
0028

Dear Mr Mxenge,

RE: POLMED: PSYCHOLOGY OUT-OF-SCOPE CLAIMS

Your letter of 12 October 2015 addressed to Service Providers, relating to the non-payment of certain services provided by Educational Psychologists, refers.

The abovementioned correspondence is of concern to our members and seems to be based on reference and comparison to Clinical Psychologists, rather than specifically focusing on the Scope of Practice of Educational Psychologists. It also appears that an outdated scope of practice document may have been consulted to inform the decision.

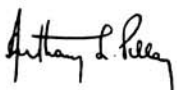
The letter from the Professional Board for Psychology Chair Professor Sodi of 17 February 2014 (attached) clarifies this issue, noting the latest *Regulations defining the scope of practice of practitioners of the profession of Psychology* promulgated in terms of Government Notice No R 263 of 6 April 2010 (attached). We strongly recommend reconsidering this matter of payment for services within the context of the latest gazetted Scope of Practice.

We also believe that, given the seriousness of the issue, the new Professional Board for Psychology (HPCSA) must be engaged to give clarity on the issue of scope of practice. This is especially necessary since there has been a number of documents and correspondences on this issue over the past few years, resulting in confusion. Our members are concerned that while awaiting the new Professional Board's clarification on the scope of practice, at the very least the services rendered to children and adolescents should warrant payment.

It is important to note that the psychological needs of South Africans are vast and pervasive, with the effect that insufficient servicing increases severity, chronicity and health care burden and costs nationally. Educational Psychologists contribute significantly to addressing these psychological needs and we urge medical aid societies to recognise their contribution. We are also concerned about the mental health fall-out for patients who will now be without the psychological care that they had been receiving following the non-payment decision.

We hope this matter can be resolved urgently as it is causing much difficulty for our Educational Psychologist members and is impeding their ability to assist those in need. Similarly, clients are becoming increasingly anxious on learning of the threat of non-payment for services rendered.

Sincerely,



Professor Anthony Pillay
President: Psychological Society of South Africa (PsySSA)



Dr Helen Dunbar-Krige
PsySSA Executive Committee Member