



MAG chairman's report 2012

Feedback on what transpired, within MAG over the last 2 years

At the most recent BHF conference that many of us attended, I left the conference with mixed feelings. My biggest concern that I have, it is evident that the "gap" between funders and service providers (doctors, pharmacies, hospital groups and other auxiliary providers) is getting wider rather than smaller.

We need to agree that to be in clinical practice today is not an easy job to say the least. The demands on providers from members/patients and funders are huge. Doctors are expected to understand the various scheme options' (over a 100) exclusions and various reimbursement guidelines of each option, and adjust their treating practices accordingly.

Considering that the funding industry do not have one standard treatment algorithm in terms of services relating to the PMB and non PMB ailments, the various funders communicate their individual treatment guidelines to the doctors. This creates its own challenges as doctors need to adjust their practice in line with what the funder reimburses into their rules.

As you are aware, the CMS has circulated various benefit definitions, specifically the benefits that funders need to provide their members in relation to Solid organ transplants, Renal transplants, Cardio vascular disorders and Prostate ca treatment.

However, for the remainder of the ailments prevalent in SA, funders determine the funding level in the absence of clear treatment guidelines.

In this regard, the MAG executive has circulated a "guideline" to the MAG membership with the view to assist medical advisors when they are faced with an application whether the requested treatment can be regarded as a minimum requirement that funders need to pay or not.

Planned National Health Insurance

We have a new minister of health at the helm of the Department of Health and progress under his leadership is evident.

The National Health Insurance implementation remains on the ANC's agenda, however, the planned 5 year implementation date was not practical, and the eventual implementation date has not been made public. Much needs to happen for the NHI to be implemented successfully in SA, and as things stand now, the public sector hospitals upgrading and management would be paramount before the NHI can be implemented successfully.

MAG projects:

- **Colleges of Medicine South Africa** – MAG, assisted the CMSA specialist training program financially. We have agreed to donate R50 000 per year for a total of 3 years (i.e. R150 000 in total) to the CMSA in training specialists.
- **Research projects at the Wits Business School (GIBS)** - Research funds will be available to MBA students whose research has the potential to contribute to our understanding of, inter alia:
 - Health policy
 - Health funding
 - Economic impacts of health interventionsMAG will contribute R15 000 per successful application towards the student's tuition fees. Maximum 2 bursaries will be approved.
- **Research projects at the University of Stellenbosch business school** – exactly the same invitation was provided to the USB, where 2 students will receive bursaries from MAG to the value of R15 000 each to complete their MBA degree in the mentioned categories above.
- **USB Health technology assessment course** - MAG will contribute R2 000 per MAG member that enrol and successfully complete the HTA course presented by the USB. The details of the course are posted on the MAG website.
- **MAG/ Council of Medical schemes** – the CMS has invited various role players in the funding industry to participate in a Managed healthcare forum. MAG was represented at the Managed Care forum by Jaco Makkink in 2011. Up to date only one Managed care forum was held.
- **MAG SAMA working group** – attached is the minutes of the meeting held between representatives from MAG and SAMA on the 15th September 2011. The following agenda points were discussed:
 - New protocol development
 - MAG and SAMA to establish a Task-team to develop TREATMENT GUIDELINES
 - SAMA MAG Coding Committee
 - Profiling of Medical Advisors

MAG website:

I am glad to report that the MAG website is fully functional.

Electronic registration and updating of member's details can be done via a unique password and login details. *It remains the MAG member's responsibility to ensure that his/her contact details are updated on the website.* I would like to urge members to visit the website, in order to see if their contact details are still updated. The risk of communication not reaching the MAG member if we do not have your correct email address is huge, please assist us to keep the MAG membership as updated as possible.

We are also looking at adding various important industry links on the website where, by clicking on a link, will take the browser to the relevant website such as for example the South African Medical devices' website.

If any MAG member has suggestions how we can enhance the functionality even further, please contact me with your suggestions and I will take it up with the webmaster and responsible exco member.

MAG's webmaster, Ms Belinda Frylinck, will attend the MAG AGM to demonstrate to the membership the functionalities being built into our MAG website.

MAG monthly meetings:

The monthly meetings, both in Gauteng and the Western cape, have been well attended during the last 2 years.

I need to thank the exco members responsible for arranging these monthly meetings. A special word of thanks to Dr Levy, who, although not a MAG exco member any more, actively played a huge role in arranging the monthly meetings in the Western cape.

It is also important to formally thank our sponsors at the various monthly meetings for their financial assistance, as without their support, we will not be able to have these valuable get togethers where relevant topics can be discussed.

MAG membership

As in the past, updating our MAG membership details remain a big challenge. At present we have 140 members' details on our data base. However, less than half of the members on the database actually renewed their membership.

I would like to urge the members to pay their annual contributions.

The contact details of the MAG's exco chairperson will be placed on the website, in order to assist the treating providers if and when they can not get a hold of a particular medical advisor.

Financial report:

Please refer to the audited financial report as provided by MAG's treasurer, however, I need to add that MAG's financial position is healthy and the finances are being properly managed.

A big thank you to MAG's exco for their services during 2010 to 2012

I would like to thank the current exco members namely Manie de Klerk, Maurice Goodman, Leonard Peterson, Chantal Hadfield, Philemon Masopha and Bruce Sparks and Dion Kapp for the services they rendered so diligently over the past 2 years. We are all very busy, and to make time for MAG's activities during one's busy schedule is not always easy. However, I need to thank the exco for all they have done to serve our members over the last two years.

A special word of thanks to the members of MAG's exco who were involved in arranging the MAG conference over the last two years, and they are Manie de Klerk, Leonard Peterson, and Jaco Makkink.

What does the next two years hold for MAG?

Unfortunately we have not been successful in our attempts to holistically move the advising profession much closer to the treating profession. On an individual scale we have made progress, however, we need a more comprehensive approach where larger role players such as the CMS can leverage the knowledge base within MAG in trying to standardise treatment protocols including the CDL list of the PMBs.

One area that I do believe medical advisors need to get involved in is publishing scientific papers. The funding industry sits on a massive amount of valuable information, i.e. actual costs that we as funders have paid in relation to specific procedures and treatments. We can and should publish our experiences based relating to contentious issues, such as arthroplasties in obese patients, phase 4 clinical trial in medications etc.

We will continually monitor the developments around the NHI implementation and align ourselves accordingly.

From a personal point of view – I would like to thank the members of MAG for the opportunity they gave me to serve as Chairperson of MAG's exco, it certainly is an honour for me.

Kind regards
Jaco Makkink