



Don't get played

## Description

**Medical aid fraud is not a victimless crime – it costs South Africa billions every year and every single member pays the price.**

When fraudsters – whether healthcare providers, members or organised syndicates – game the system, the financial strain is passed on to every honest member through higher contributions and reduced benefits.

The Board of Healthcare Funders estimates that between 10% and 15% of all healthcare claims contain fraudulent, wasteful or abusive elements, costing the industry an estimated R28 billion to R30 billion a year. That's money that should be going towards your care. By calling out fraud, you help keep contributions affordable and benefits intact for everyone.



## Healthcare provider fraud

These are scams initiated by healthcare practitioners, pharmacies and hospitals.



**Phantom billing:** Claiming for consultations, procedures or medication that were never actually provided.



**Upcoding:** Billing for a more expensive procedure than the one actually performed.



**Substitution of goods:** Dispensing cheaper or generic medication but billing for the expensive original.



**Double billing:** Submitting the same claim more than once, sometimes with altered dates or details.



**Kickbacks:** Receiving cash, gifts or incentives for referring patients to specific providers.



## Member fraud

Yes, members can be fraudsters too — here's how:



**Card farming:** Allowing friends or family not registered on your plan to use your medical aid card.



**Non-disclosure:** Hiding pre-existing conditions when joining a scheme to dodge waiting periods.



**Altering invoices:** Modifying provider invoices to inflate amounts or change what was claimed for.



**Misusing savings accounts:** Purchasing non-medical items like toiletries or nappies using a medical savings account, often in collusion with a pharmacist.

## **Facing the consequences**

If you're caught committing medical aid fraud, you face:

- Immediate repayment of all fraudulent claims
- Termination of your medical aid membership
- Criminal charges and possible imprisonment of up to five years
- Reporting to the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA), if you're a practitioner

## **Blow the whistle on fraud**

### **Category**

1. Our Knowledge Centre

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