



PCINS

PRACTICE CODE NUMBERING SYSTEM

A Division of the Board of Healthcare Funders

At A Glance



2.0

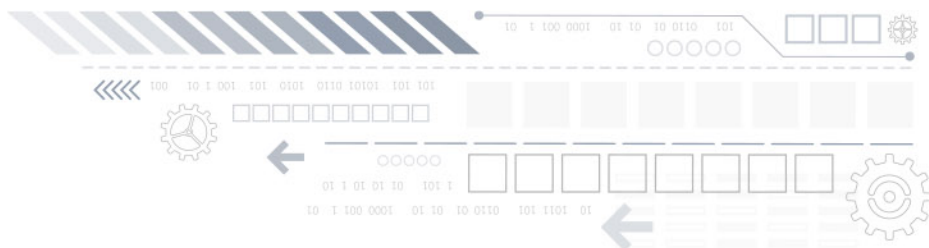
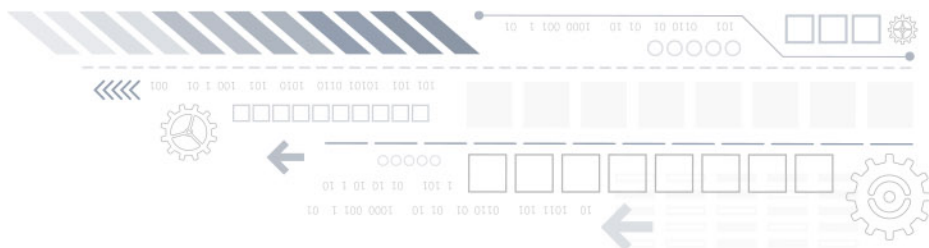


Table of Contents

PRACTICE CODE NUMBERING SYSTEM (PCNS).....	3
WHAT.....	3
WHY.....	3
WHO	3
HOW	3
HEALTHCARE SERVICE PROVIDERS.....	4
How to get a practice number.....	4
Secure online payment and renewal of practice numbers	4
HEALTHCARE FUNDING ORGANISATIONS.....	5
Real-time Search of Practice Number Database	5
Online Registration to Access Practice Number Data	5



PRACTICE CODE NUMBERING SYSTEM (PCNS)

The Practice Code Numbering System (PCNS) is a list of unique practice billing codes for providers of healthcare services in South Africa, Namibia and Lesotho. It promotes a uniform, national and legally constituted identifier for billing purposes.

WHAT

What is a practice number? The practice code number (PCN) is a unique number allocated to all registered healthcare providers providing services to private patients in South Africa, Namibia and Lesotho.

WHY

Why a practice number? A practice number is essential in the claims reimbursement process and a legal requirement for the process of reimbursement to either a medical scheme member or healthcare service provider (HSP). This is in accordance with the requirement of the Medical Schemes Act 131 of 1998 wherein it is stated that “a medical scheme may only reimburse a member or a provider of relevant healthcare services for services rendered against a valid practice code number.”

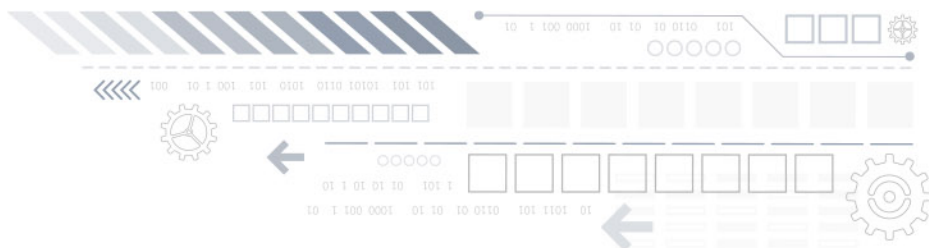
WHO

Who is responsible? The Board of Healthcare Funders (BHF) has been appointed by the Council for Medical Schemes (CMS), in terms of the provisions of the Medical Schemes Act, to administer the issuing of practice code numbers.

HOW

How is a practice number assigned? The PCNS division, under the auspices of the BHF, is responsible for assigning practice code numbers to accredited suppliers of relevant health services applying for a PCN. It follows a rigorous accreditation process to ensure compliance with legislated verification criteria. The applicant’s registration or licensing for independent practice is also verified with the appropriate statutory body or licensing authority.

CONTACTS: If you require more information, visit <https://www.pcns.co.za> or get into contact with the PCNS team via email at clientservices@bhfglobal.com. During the COVID-19 lock-down period no voice calls can be taken on the (+27) 86 130 2010 client services number. Please communicate all enquiries via email at clientservices@bhfglobal.com.



HEALTHCARE SERVICE PROVIDERS

How to get a practice number

In order to obtain a practice code number from the Practice Code Number System (PCNS), healthcare service providers have to be registered as an independent Practitioner, Practice or Agency with the relevant statutory council. The applicant's scope of practice must also be corroborated by the BHF in accordance with the accreditation requirements.

In order to receive a practice number, service providers need to do the following:

- Visit the PCNS website <https://www.pcns.co.za> and download relevant application forms
- Once completed, all forms and required documentation should be returned to the BHF offices by registered mail or overnight courier, together with the applicable registration fee (see 2020 rates online) or proof of payment of the applicable fee via bank EFT.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: During the COVID-19 lockdown period, all forms together with proof of bank EFT payment can be sent via email to pcns_admin@bhfglobal.com

Upon successful completion of the accreditation process, a unique practice number will be issued by the BHF and awarded to the applicant. This practice number must appear on all official documentation and communications.

On average, the accreditation process takes between 10 to 20 working days, provided that the application form is completed in full and all supporting documentation has been submitted.

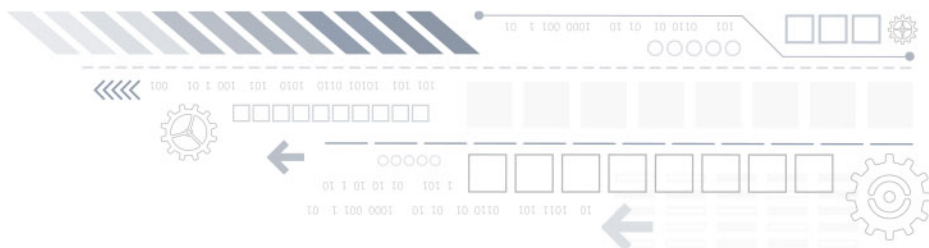
Once the practice number has been issued, all medical schemes on the PCNS database will be notified electronically. The PCNS registration must be renewed annually by 31 March.

Secure online payment and renewal of practice numbers

Secure online payment of annual fees for the renewal of practice numbers is an important enhancement and a newly launched feature of the PCNS 2.0 website service offering.

Annual renewals are required to keep service provider information up-to-date and ensure ongoing access to and use of practice numbers, including all associated services. However, the procedure to effect this renewal was a predominantly manual process and an administrative burden; one which members often faulted.

As of April 2020, the new e-commerce feature not only streamlines and fast-tracks a very important part of the PCN process, it also ensures database integrity. Healthcare service providers simply login to the PCNS website, update all required account information and effect online payment of annual fees.



HEALTHCARE FUNDING ORGANISATIONS

Real-time Search of Practice Number Database

Real-time access to practice numbers and healthcare service provider data is now possible with PCNS 2.0, a new website for the Practice Code Number System (PCNS) recently launched by the Board of Healthcare Funders (BHF).

The real-time search capability is a major enhancement and one that necessitated a complete redevelopment of the PCN application. This formed part of the second phase of an extensive system revamp initiated by BHF's PCN division last year.

Until now users, who needed to verify that a practice exists in order to process a claim, experienced a 24-hour information delay. This, in turn, resulted in corresponding hold-ups with the actual processing of claims.

The new PCNS 2.0 search facility is real-time, which means that there is no delay in information. As the database is updated with new service provider data and new practices and practice code numbers are added, PCNS users will have the information at their fingertips – literally.

Online Registration to Access Practice Number Data

With PCNS 2.0 user registration for healthcare funding organisations has also been expedited and simplified. Until now, funders had to email BHF and request an account, username and access to practice number information when they needed to process a claims reimbursement. This was a tedious and cumbersome procedure, which resulted in unnecessary delays.

As of 1 April 2020, companies no longer need to contact the PCN division at BHF in order to gain access. With PCNS 2.0, everything has been streamlined and user account registration can quickly be done online, with account approval within 24-hours during business days for all new user registrations.

Improved security protocols and new database technologies employed as part of the new development also meant that old user accounts could not be transferred to the new system. As a result, all healthcare funding organisations will have to re-register on the PCNS 2.0 website at <https://www.pcns.co.za> in order to gain access to all the new functionalities.

Existing users should also reset browser bookmarks to the new URL - <https://www.pcns.co.za> – thereby ensuring they don't access the old system by default. Both new and old systems will be running in parallel for a short period, in order to ease the transition to PCNS 2.0.