

# Health Ally



*Alliance Health Quarterly Newsletter*

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- 2013 Software Migration
- Fully Fledged Client Services department
- Congratulations all 2013 new parents
- The Trauma Centre Provider Agreement

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## ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE...

As the year draws to an end and the Christmas season approaches, there is always so much activity and personal business to attend to that it is easy to forget to thank you, our valued members and service providers, for your support.

The holiday season offers us a special opportunity to extend our personal thanks to our partners, and to wish you all the very best for 2014.

We at Alliance Health gather together and wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We consider you a vital part of our existence and extend our wishes for good health and good



cheer. It is people like you who make being in business such a pleasure all year long.

Our members' good health and satisfaction with service is a source of pride to us, and with stakeholders like you, we find going through each day a rewarding experience.

*We value your support...*

We tip our glasses to you.

Thanks again for a wonderful year.

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!**

## RISING UP TO SERVE

*"Never believe that a few caring people can't change the world. For, indeed, that's all who ever have." – Margaret Mead*

In the quest to provide new levels of excellence in health care solutions and customer service to members of Multimed, Northern Alliance, the

Northern Medical Aid Society & Alliance Health Options, 2013 has ushered in the advent of a fully-fledged **Client Services department** to cater to the rising demands of Alliance Health's ever growing member and service provider base.

The Client Services Manager, Audra Levendale, and

her team will ensure that no stone goes unturned in the establishment of better relations with all members and service providers.

Along with a host of other contacts at Alliance Health [clientservices@healthzim.com](mailto:clientservices@healthzim.com) is a key email to keep on your fingertips for fast, efficient and friendly service.

## STAYING SAFE DURING THE RAINY SEASON

The rainy season is upon us once again. While we appreciate the rain and the life it brings, precautions should be taken to ensure safety for you and your loved ones.

- Wear appropriate footwear with solid support and slip resistant soles.
- Avoid eating street food.
- Don't be in a hurry; avoid slipping on wet surfaces by taking short steps.
- Avoid walking through puddles no matter how shallow they appear.
- Lead in safety by cleaning up wet hazards.

- Shower after getting wet in the rain.
- Make sure that there are entry mat's in the doorways.
- Avoid stagnant water: a breeding ground for bacteria & parasites.
- Obey the speed limit and drive slower in the rain.
- Maintain an extra distance between you & the vehicle in front of you.
- Make sure that the windshield wipers are in proper working order.
- Turn on your headlights while driving during rainy weather.



*Just a little rain can cause a lot of pain...*

Following these and other wet weather precautions, instead of singing "rain, rain, go away!!" you and your loved ones can welcome the rains with open arms.

## SOFTWARE MIGRATION FOR IMPROVED EFFICIENCY

By now members will be aware that we are migrating the administration of the Northern Medical Aid Society from the current software platform used since 2011, to a new software system.

The new software system has greater functionality than our current system & we trust that this will enable us to provide you with better service & support.

We would like to reassure you at this stage that there are no changes required to your current membership number,

and that there will be no need for you to complete any new forms to facilitate the change over process. However as we start to utilize the greater functionality of the new software system, it may become necessary for us to verify, or to collect, further information from you to ensure that we are able to provide you with sms updates, emails etc.

This further development of the system and our services is scheduled for the duration of 2014 as we strive to continually improve on your ease of access to

information, as well as in our administrative efficiency.

Before the end of 2013 NMAS and Northern Alliance members will be receiving their monthly invoices in slightly different formats.

We have been able to incorporate many of the helpful suggestions for improvements which members have provided us with over the last eighteen months and look forward to providing you with im-

## ON A LIGHTER NOTE



*"Grandma's the best...!!!"*

### Grandma's house

Little Johnny and his family were having Sunday dinner at his Grandmother's house. Everyone was seated around the table as the food was being served.

When little Johnny received his plate he started eating right away.

"Johnny wait until we say our prayer."

"I don't have to." The boy replied.

"Of course, you do," his mother insisted. "We say a prayer before eating at our house."

"That's our house," Johnny explained. "But this is Grandma's house, and **she knows how to cook!**"

### Grandma's revenge

When my three-year-old son opened the birthday gift from his grandmother, he discovered a water pistol. He squealed with delight and headed for the nearest sink.

I was not so pleased. I turned to Mom and said, "I'm surprised at you. Don't you remember how we used to drive you crazy with water guns?"

Mom smiled and then replied....."**Yes, I remember.**"

## GENERIC VS BRAND NAME DRUGS

What are generic and brand drugs?

Each medicine (drug) has an approved name referred to as the generic name. Many medicines also have one or more brand (trade) names. This is chosen by the company that makes it and often chosen to be memorable for advertising, or to be easier to say or spell than some long generic name.

Without properly understanding the similarities and differences between generic and branded medicines, it is easy to become confused and anxious. This is particularly the case when you are used to taking a certain medicine and are introduced to another that has a different name and appearance but is 'the same'.

There are two main points that you need to understand:

1. Even though a generic medicine may taste, look and be packaged differently, it has the **same active ingredient** as the branded medicine you are used to taking.
2. The generic medicine has been **thoroughly tested** by the pharmaceutical company. The generic drug is interchangeable with the branded one. This means that it will have the same actions in the body. The only differences exist in the inactive ingredients, which will not have any negative effect but contribute to the different shape, color and taste.



*“Does cheaper mean lower quality??”*

Pharmacies sometime substitute brand name drugs with generic drugs. This may be done in order to give you the drug that is least expensive. On average, the cost of a generic drug is lower than the brand name product. It should be remembered that cheaper does not mean inferior quality in this case.

## PROVIDER AGREEMENT WITH THE TRAUMA CENTRE

We are pleased to be able to announce that we have recently concluded a Preferred Provider agreement with The Trauma Centre to accept members of Multimed, Alliance Health Options, Northern Alliance and NMAS.

However, we wish to point out that there are the following restrictions applicable to use of The Trauma Centre.

For members of NMAS, AHFoZ tariffs

apply to all benefits. As such, there will be significant shortfalls between member benefits and the Trauma Centre charges for ICU, HDU and Private Ward accommodation. There are **NO SHORTFALLS** for casualty, ambulances or for accommodation in a twin bedded ward.

For members of the Northern Alliance, Multimed and AH Options plans, benefits are restricted in each case to rates that have been adjudged as Reasonable

and Customary. These rates are calculated according to historical data of claims costs for all members in each territory that we operate. Shortfalls apply for ICU, HDU and Private Ward Accommodation. There are **NO SHORTFALLS** for casualty services, ambulances or for accommodation in a twin bedded ward.

We trust that this arrangement is in the overall best interests of all our members.

*“A perfect example of minority rule is a new baby in the house. Congratulations!!!”*



*When is the right time to call the doctor??*

## NEW MUM - WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR

**CONGRATULATIONS** to all the 2013 new parents. You will probably (if not already) be faced with that moment with your new baby when you ask yourself 'Is this normal?' & question whether or not something needs medical attention or will clear up in a day or so.

Call your doctor if you see any of the following:

- Blue lips or yellow eyes
- Blue, yellow/pale skin.
- Patches of white in the baby's mouth
- Redness, pus, or an odour around umbilical cord stump.
- A temperature of more than 37.5 degrees C.
- No stool for 48 hours.
- Any sign of dehydration
- Frequent bowel movements with liquid or mucus.
- Bloody stools.
- Repeated vomiting.
- Any sign that your baby is wheezing or gasping for breath.
- If baby is distressed and pulling at her ears.
- Several refusals to feed in a row.

When in doubt, follow your instinct; mum's just know when something's not right.

Congratulations to the Alliance Health staff members who were blessed with the bundles of joy below in 2013...

*From left: Miss Kaylah A. Chitenhe (30 April), Master Runyararo Zvekare (20 July), Master Tungamirai and Miss Tinevimbo Mandikita (29 July)*



We're on the web!!  
[www.alliancehealth.co.zw](http://www.alliancehealth.co.zw)

## FRIENDLY REMINDERS

- Ensure that your **email addresses and contact details** are kept up to date by advising Alliance Health of any changes to such. The importance of being able to contact members via email or phone cannot be overstated.
- Kindly ensure that all **claim forms** are completed in full before submitting, taking note of the key areas marked "critical information".
- **Misuse and abuse** of medical funds is one cause of ever rising medical care costs. With this in mind, anyone caught attempting to defraud Alliance Health will be prosecuted.
- All members travelling abroad and out of the area of cover (on Multimed and AH Options) are encouraged to use the **ACE Leisure Travel Cover** and to notify Alliance Health before embarking on the trip. Remember to use the number on the back of the travel card in case of emergency.
- Lost / stolen membership cards attract a \$20 **replacement fee** unless member can produce police report.
- **Pre-authorization** is required for all major procedures, tests or treatment.
- Information on Alliance Health products, application forms and new rates and benefits can be downloaded from the website and any feedback is welcome. [www.alliancehealth.co.zw](http://www.alliancehealth.co.zw)
- Members and service providers may use the 24HR Emergency numbers below for after hour emergency cases: **0772 126 120 / 0712 347 879.**
- Alliance Health offices will be **closed**

**for the festive season** from 1pm on the 20th of December, re-opening on the 30th of December 2013 and closed on the 1st of January 2014.



*Impressed by our service?  
Or Not happy with our service?*

Let us know:  
[clientservices@healthzim.com](mailto:clientservices@healthzim.com)