

ICON'S E-AUTH GIVES CANCER PATIENTS REAL-TIME ACCESS TO LIFE-SAVING TREATMENTS

For anyone who has been diagnosed with cancer or is living with it, time is of the essence. In an ideal world, treatment plans should begin as soon as possible to arrest the disease from spreading, but archaic authorisation processes can stop patient care in its tracks – sometimes by as much as four weeks.

In an effort to address this and give cancer patients immediate access to life-saving treatments following diagnosis Icon Oncology developed its proprietary SAAS (software as a service), e-Auth®. Connecting oncologists with medical schemes through intelligent cloud computing, it enables doctors to submit evidence-based treatment plans for authorisation and have them approved in real-time so that treatment can begin as soon as possible. This is in sharp contrast to the excessively long authorisation lead times which the industry can experience.

“Waiting for weeks for authorisation to be granted is extremely stressful for a patient, especially if they are in the early stages of their cancer. Icon, which is a network of oncologists – representing more than 80% of the industry – sought to overcome this unnecessary administrative burden by developing a tool that would allow oncologists to give their patients care as soon as is viably possible,” explains Dr Ernst Marais, COO at Icon Oncology.

The business to business (B2B) technology, which is a first in South Africa, is now being used by some of the country's largest medical schemes such as Discovery Health and Medihelp. It works by giving oncologists access to a database of evidence-based protocols that have been developed by doctors in the Icon network and pre-approved by Icon's medical aid partners.

Based on the value-based care model, which puts the patient at the centre of their care, these evidence-based protocols can decrease the cost of treatments by up to 27% while also improving patient outcomes.

“Upon an oncologist choosing an Icon approved protocol, it is automatically submitted to the respective medical aid and approved on receipt, in real time – removing all of the administrative headaches and giving oncologists much needed time to get their patients onto the right care, right away,” says Dr Marais.



The time saved also greatly benefits the medical aids as typically they need staff to manage the lengthy authorisation process's administration; e-Auth completely reduces this need.

“Not only do our evidence-based protocols save the schemes 27% on oncology costs, we also save them a vast amount of time that would otherwise would have been spent on admin,” concludes Marais.

For more information about Icon Oncology and its e-Auth® tool visit www.iconsa.co.za.

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About ICON: Icon Oncology is part of the recently rebranded Medical Specialist Holdings (MSH) (Pty)Ltd. Today Icon Oncology represents subsidiaries, Icon Radiotherapy, Icon Network and Icon Managed Care. Across its business, Icon is the South African pioneer of Value-Based Care (VBC) in cancer treatment, a viable and much-needed alternative to the traditional fee-for-service model. Its provider-driven protocols have been proven to significantly improve efficacy and efficiencies and it is practiced by oncologists within its broad network, representing more than 80% of practising oncologists. VBC is effective as it places the patient at the centre ensuring the right care at the right time and the right price. The Icon team also developed e-Auth®, a proprietary software platform that can grant oncologists real-time authorisation of Icon approved treatment plans. Together, VBC and e-Auth address burning issues associated with oncology, namely excessive costs and burdensome administration.