



Discovery Health expanded access to mental healthcare for 22,000 members in one year, with better outcomes and lower hospital costs

October 14, 2026

A fully funded digital mental health benefit integrated into Discovery Health's existing care pathways and member app reached 22,000 member activations in its first 12 months, with 90% user satisfaction, clinically significant improvement in depression and anxiety, and 6% lower adjusted mental-health-related in-hospital costs in the year after use

BOSTON and JOHANNESBURG, Oct. 14, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Amwell® (NYSE: AMWL), a leading provider of technology-enabled care, today published a new case study on Discovery Health's use of SilverCloud® by Amwell® to deliver a fully funded digital mental health benefit in South Africa. The case study examines the three questions health plans ask of digital care: whether members will use it, whether it improves their health, and what it does to costs.

In the program's first 12 months, **22,000 Discovery Health members activated the benefit**. Members with moderate, moderately severe or severe depression at baseline, and members with moderate or severe anxiety, showed **clinically significant improvement rates of 60% to 78% across depression and anxiety measures, depending on severity at baseline. 90% of surveyed users were satisfied**, and the case study reports **6% lower adjusted mental-health-related in-hospital costs** in the year after use, after adjusting for baseline experience and confounding factors.

Activation first: embedded in the benefit members already use

Discovery Health introduced the benefit in late 2023 as South Africa's first funded digital therapeutic benefit for mental health. Rather than launching a standalone digital service, Discovery Health built SilverCloud directly into its existing mental healthcare benefit, clinical referral pathway and member experience. Eligible adult members with mild-to-moderate depression or anxiety can be referred by a GP or psychologist, activate the benefit through the Discovery Health App and begin structured internet-based Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, or iCBT.

Members receive evidence-based digital CBT content alongside personalized written guidance and feedback from trained human supporters, who monitor progress and help members stay engaged. Referring healthcare professionals remain part of the care pathway throughout.

The findings also show where activation was highest. Activation was **approximately three times higher** among members already using other digital health services associated with their medical scheme membership, and **approximately 30% higher** among members newly diagnosed with depression than among those diagnosed one year or more earlier.

"Introducing South Africa's first funded digital therapeutic for mental health is a milestone we are genuinely proud of - not because of what it represents for Discovery Health, but because of what it means for our members. iCBT is a clinically validated, effective treatment that puts members in the driver's seat of their own mental health recovery, on their own terms and in their own time," said **Dr. Noluthando Nematswerani, Chief Clinical Officer, Discovery Health**.

Outcomes: clinical improvement, satisfaction and lower costs

Findings presented in the case study include:

- **22,000 member activations** within the first 12 months
- For members with moderate, moderately severe, and severe depression at baseline, clinically significant improvement rates of **60%, 71%, and 78%**, respectively; measured using the Patient Health Questionnaire-9, or PHQ-9, for depression
- For members with moderate and severe anxiety at baseline, clinically significant improvement rates of **60% and 66%**, respectively; measured using the Generalized Anxiety Disorder-7, or GAD-7, assessment for anxiety
- **90% user satisfaction** among surveyed members
- **6% lower adjusted mental-health-related in-hospital costs** in the year after use, after adjusting for baseline experience and confounding factors
- Approximately **3x higher activation** among members already engaged with other digital health services
- Approximately **30% higher activation** among members newly diagnosed with depression compared with those diagnosed one year or more earlier

“Discovery Health has demonstrated what can be achieved when evidence-based digital treatment is embedded into an existing mental health benefit, clinical referral pathway, and member experience,” said **Ian Carr, Vice President, International Behavioural Health at Amwell**. “Reaching 22,000 activations in 12 months, alongside strong clinical outcomes, high satisfaction and lower adjusted in-hospital costs, demonstrates the potential for guided digital CBT to expand access while supporting the long-term sustainability of mental healthcare systems.”

“These results point to a practical model for health plans: fund digital care as part of the existing benefit, embed access in the digital and clinical pathways members already use, keep the trusted clinician referral, combine on-demand treatment with personalized human support, and measure the clinical and financial outcomes so the plan can show what it achieved,” said **Michael Miller, Senior Vice President at Amwell**. “This approach aligns with what the Amwell Platform enables for U.S. health plans.”

The full case study, “**Discovery Health reached 22,000 members with funded digital therapy in 12 months**,” is available at <https://business.amwell.com/resources/2026/case-study/how-discovery-health-scaled-access-to-mental-healthcare-for-22000-members-in-one-year>.

About Amwell

Amwell offers health plans and healthcare organizations a single, comprehensive, technology-enabled care platform. We use technology to provide consumers with better access to more convenient, affordable, and effective care. The Amwell Platform includes software and services that power many clinical programmes from Amwell and our growing number of partners. Our platform allows consumers to experience unified, personalised, and simple access to diversified clinical programs across the care continuum. As more people seek care online and more clinical programmes become available, we offer integrated, future-ready, consistent solutions. The Amwell Platform is proven, operating at a large scale, enabling care for millions while delivering dependable outcomes.

The platform's digital mental health module, SilverCloud® by Amwell®, provides evidence-based, structured programmes that use the principles of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and can be delivered with human guidance to support engagement, clinical improvement, and recovery. SilverCloud has supported more than one million users internationally. In the United States, therapy is not provided by Amwell through SilverCloud; therapy is delivered through Amwell Medical Group® virtual visits with licensed therapists.

For two decades, Amwell has proudly served some of the largest and most sophisticated healthcare organizations in the U.S. and worldwide. For more information, visit business.amwell.com or LinkedIn.

About Discovery

Discovery Limited is a South African-founded financial services organisation that operates in the healthcare, life assurance, short-term insurance, banking, savings and investment and wellness markets. Since inception in 1992, Discovery has been guided by a clear core purpose – to make people healthier and to enhance and protect their lives. This has manifested in its globally recognised Vitality Shared-Value insurance model, active in over 37 countries with over 50 million members. The model is exported and scaled through the Global Vitality Network, an alliance of some of the largest insurers across key markets including AIA (Asia), Ping An (China), Sumitomo (Japan), John Hancock (US), Manulife (Canada) and Vitality Life & Health (UK, wholly owned). Discovery trades on the Johannesburg Securities Exchange as DSY.

About Discovery Health Medical Scheme

Discovery Health Medical Scheme is the largest open medical scheme in South Africa and independent from the Discovery Group. As with other medical schemes, Discovery Health Medical Scheme is a non-profit entity that pools all contributions to fund healthcare claims. It is regulated by the Council for Medical Schemes, governed by the Medical Schemes Act, No. 131 of 1998, and administered by Discovery Health (Pty) Ltd. Medical schemes are governed by Boards of Trustees, and belong to the members. The Board of Trustees oversees Discovery Health Medical Scheme. The Principal Officer is Charlotte Mbewu.

Results qualification

These results are derived from an observational causal modelling exercise conducted among members invited to participate in iCBT. Statistical risk adjustment was performed for a wide range of measured demographic, clinical, cost, utilization and mental health-related confounding factors to estimate the association between iCBT activation and subsequent outcomes. These findings should be interpreted as estimated effects of iCBT engagement within the eligible invited population, as opposed to a direct comparison of the effectiveness or cost impact of all other alternative treatment approaches such as medication, psychotherapy, psychiatric care or other treatment pathways.

These results reflect the Discovery Health population and implementation model described in the case study. Results may vary across populations, healthcare systems, and implementation approaches.

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