

INTRODUCTION OF HEALTH INSURANCE INDIA

In mid 80's most of the hospitals in India were government owned and treatment was free of cost. With the advent of Private Medical Care the need for Health Insurance was felt and various Insurance Companies (New India Assurance, National Insurance Company, Oriental Insurance & United Insurance Company) introduced Mediclaim Insurance as a product.

According to recent news report health insurance continues to be the fastest growing segment with annual growth rate of 25%. Health Premium has risen to Rs. 8100 crores in 2009-2010. As per the recent reports from various agencies the health sector has the potential to become a Rs. 30000-crore industry by 2015. Estimates of leading Chambers of Commerce also confirm these estimates.

On August 15, 2007 Prime Minister had announced Rs 2000 Crores for Health Insurance for poor citizens and the impact of the same is being seen by us in the form of success of RSBY (Rashtriya Swasth Bima Yojna).

In 2001 with entry of various private Insurance companies now the customers have choice of buying this insurance from 21 Insurance companies.

The Companies, which offer Health or Mediclaim Insurance at present are;

1. Apollo DKV Insurance Company Limited.
2. Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Company Limited
3. Bharti AXA General Insurance Company Limited
4. Cholamandalam MS General Insurance Company Limited
5. Future Generali India Insurance Company Limited
6. HDFC General Insurance Company Ltd.
7. ICICI Lombard General Insurance Limited.
8. IFFCO Tokio General Insurance Company Limited
9. Max Bupa Health Insurance Company Limited
10. National Insurance Company Limited
11. New India Assurance Company Limited
12. Oriental Insurance Company Limited
13. Raheja QBE General Insurance Company Limited
14. Reliance General Insurance Company Limited
15. Royal Sundram Alliance Insurance Company Limited
16. SBI General Insurance Company Limited (Introducing Shortly)
17. Shriram General Insurance Company Limited
18. Star health and Allied Insurance Company Limited
19. TATA AIG General Insurance Company Limited.
20. United India Insurance Company Limited
21. Universal Sompo General Insurance Company Limited

India is the only country where hospitalization insurance policy was being sold as Mediclaim Insurance Policies. The very name gives a feeling to the insured that claim has to be lodged. If motor insurance policy is not sold as motor insurance claim policy and household insurance policy is not sold as household claim policy then why this be named as Mediclaim?

In the recent years the trend has emerged that some Insurance companies have started calling this product as Health Insurance.

Health Insurance and Mediclaim are two different names for the same product. The change has started coming and now we have started calling it Health Insurance. ICICI Lombard has even named it as Health Insurance Policy.

Calling is as Health Insurance is a positive way of looking at this Insurance. It also giving us a feeling that we as a society have started moving from curative medical care to preventive medical care.

According to sources in Oriental insurance it is being felt that mindset has started changing over the last couple of years “ The new middle- class of of India aspires for quality healthcare service and doesn't mind going to expensive hospitals like Apollo or Escorts. There is no reason why healthcare insurance should not be successful with this class.