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CURRENT NEWS

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Elderly gaps: Health insurers have mostly bypassed senior citizens. That's the market a new entrant must cover



Source: The Times of India

India's insurance regulations may be tweaked to dismantle the wall between life and non-life insurers. If that happens, LIC, the market leader in life insurance, will consider getting into health insurance. It's well placed to do so, with an annual profit in excess of ₹40,000cr and its share price having almost doubled since Oct. The big question is, what will this mean for consumers.

National Health Claim Exchange platform to launch in 2-3 months, will simplify health insurance claim process



Source: EconomicTimes

"The National Health Claim Exchange portal is almost ready and likely to be launched in the next two to three months. This portal has been developed as part of Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM)," said official sources.

The portal NHCX will be a single platform that will serve as a gateway for exchanging claims-related information between the payer and service providers.

"The NHCX would enable seamless interoperability of health claims processing, enhancing efficiency and transparency in the insurance industry and benefiting the policyholders and patients," the source said further.

New Health Insurance Benefits For Senior Citizens



Source: ABP

Navigating the complexities of health insurance can be particularly challenging for senior citizens, who often face higher health risks and increasing medical costs as they age. Recent changes in health insurance rules aimed at improving coverage options for the elderly have been a significant step forward. This article explores the new health insurance rules for senior citizens, emphasising how these changes can impact their access to medical care and financial security,

IRDAI proposes obligatory insurance coverage in gram panchayats across India

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Motor:EVs are a growing opportunity for insurers, but pose near-term challenges



Source: Asia Insurance Review

Global sales of electric vehicles (EVs) are growing fast and emerging as a new risk pool for the motor insurance industry, according to an "Economic Insight" report published by Swiss Re Institute.

Why health insurance with OPD covers are growing popular in India? Check top plans with OPD cover



Source: Mint

The main reason behind the growing popularity of health insurance plans with OPD covers and riders is the increasing preference for comprehensive coverage that extends beyond conventional inpatient services. Eighty percent of customers cite the accessibility to doctor consultations and diagnostic tests as one of the main reasons behind opting for OPD benefits in insurance plans.

Key bills on insurance, bankruptcy may face delays as BJP gets diminished



Source: Live Mint

The new government may reconsider some of the pending bills and other proposed legislations, as the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has failed to secure a clear mandate, and its dependence on allies has increased due to a reduction in its Lok Sabha seats from 303 to 239 (as of 7.05 pm) in the 2024 elections.

CURRENT NEWS

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How NRIs can extract maximum value from voluntary deductible in their health insurance



Source: EconomicTimes

NRIs should genuinely take into account the long-term advantages of maintaining a health insurance policy in India. The benefits of affordable premiums, GST waiver, coverage during trips to India, and the ability to serve waiting periods while abroad far outweigh the perceived inconveniences.

The best part is that they do not need to visit India to get the policy as the whole process can be completed online through just a few clicks of the button. However, it's important to make an informed choice by comparing online and weighing the benefits of one policy against another before taking a call.

Health insurance premiums can be reduced if you don't make a claim, policy cancellations to be less costly and more: 5 rule changes



Source: EconomicTimes

Health insurance rule changes: To make health insurance policy more inclusive, flexible and customer-friendly, IRDAI has recently released a master circular on health insurance business. The regulator introduces new measures regarding cancellation charges, standardising no-claim bonus, and increasing claim settlement transparency. ET Wealth Online explores how these regulations empower policyholders and improve their health insurance experience.

IRDAI mandates Cross Boarder Reinsurers(CBRs) to furnish collaterals for accessing Indian business from Fy 25-26



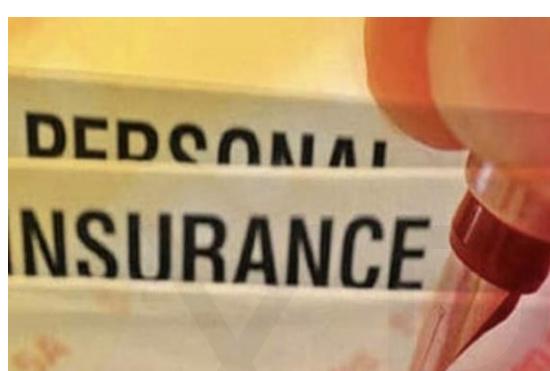
Source: Asia Insurance Post

IRDAI has clarified that premium retroceded by the branches of foreign reinsurers and Indian reinsurers to CBRs, premiums ceded to CBRs for the government schemes such as PMFBY, PMJAY, PMJJBY, PMSBY and If total premium ceded by an insurer to CBRs is up to Rs 75 crore during a financial year, provided that the CBRs are rated 'A-' or above from S&P or equivalent. they cannot be subjected to collateral requirements

33 of global Top 300 broking groups base their HQ in Asia Pacific

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Corporate governance for insurers: Irdai lists new guidelines



Source: Indian Express

The auditor refresh policy is to promote independence, impartiality, and integrity in the audit process. It enhances transparency and accountability by introducing new auditors at regular intervals of four years, preventing complacency, and maintaining rigorous financial reporting standards

Health insurance claim rule change: Cashless claims must be cleared in 3 hours; insurer to pay hospital charges for delay in discharge, says IRDAI



Source: EconomicTimes

Health insurance: The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has released a master circular to streamline health insurance claim process. Previously, delays in claim approvals forced patients to stay in hospitals longer. Now, insurers have three hours to approve cashless discharge requests. Additionally, insurers will be liable for extra hospital charges due to delays.

Alleged Delays By Surveyor/Insurer Not Grounds To Reject Repudiation: NCDRC



UNITED INDIA INSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED

Source: Live Law

The **National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission**, presided by Mr. Subhash Chandra and Dr. Sadhna Shanker (member), held that insurance claims cannot be rejected by the insured solely because of supposed delays by the surveyor or the insurer.

Amending insurance laws, open architecture for agents should be sectoral priority for new govt: Experts



Amending the insurance laws, introduction of open architecture for insurance agents, review of regulations relating investments distribution, development of climate and natural disaster insurance covers are some of the agenda that the new Indian government has to fulfill, said insurance sector experts.

They also said the rules and regulations governing the insurance sector should be simplified and streamlined.

“The new government should amend the laws governing the insurance sector and review the outdated Insurance Rules, 1939 and make amendments in line with the new age insurance sector requirements,” Conjeevaram Baradhwaj, Consultant and Advisor told IANS.

With over three decades of experience in the Indian life insurance sector, Baradhwaj was earlier Executive Vice President, Future Generali Life Insurance and Senior Vice President, Bharti Axa Life Insurance.

Two years back, the Indian government had proposed drastic changes to the two insurance laws – Insurance Act 1938 and the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Act 1999.

Scrapping of the statutory Rs 100 crore startup capital for life and general insurance business and Rs 200 crore for reinsurance business, allowing different kinds of insurers including captives, changing the investment provisions are some of the major amendments proposed by the Indian government to the insurance laws.

The government also proposed to allow an insurer to distribute other financial products as specified by and subject to regulations and to services related or incidental to insurance business.

Later the government did not proceed further on the proposed amendments.

“The new regulations would introduce reforms in the insurance industry and benefit multiple sectors of the economy. For example, allowing insurance companies to sell financial products would create a new revenue stream for them and provide financial institutions with a new distribution channel. Additionally, permitting insurance companies to invest in rated debts and equity of private companies would increase capital availability for these companies and offer new investment opportunities for insurance companies,” Sameer Bakshi, General Counsel, Digit Insurance Group told IANS.

It is hoped that the upcoming government will review the Insurance Bill, consider stakeholders’ comments, and introduce a new Insurance Act to advance the Indian insurance industry to the next level, Bakshi said.

“These are reforms meant to attain operational synergies and which promote a broad based development. The Indian insurance sector has only 60 insurance companies targeting a population of over 1.40 billion. The existing number of companies is still low when compared to other countries and the population potential,” Baradhwaj remarked.

According to Baradhwaj, besides operational synergies, the Government should in discussion with the sectoral regulator-Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)- also address the question on how to convert insurance into a “pull product” from a “push product”.

With insurance penetration still low in India, Baradhwaj said regional and small players in the financial sector have the potential to penetrate deeper with a local brand name and customer loyalty. Lowering the capital base and allowing such companies to float insurance companies could increase the local and rural insurance.

“There will also be operational synergies in the form of savings in costs, common processes especially for common brands could promote operational efficiency if life, non-life and health insurance products are allowed to be operated under a single registration,” Baradhwaj added.

“Introduce the amendments in a phased manner to monitor their impact and make necessary adjustments, ensuring financial stability and compliance,” Rrajesh Sharrma, CEO and Principal Officer, Anand Rathi Insurance Brokers told IANS

Contd.

Amending insurance laws, open architecture for agents should be sectoral priority for new govt: Experts



The other unfinished work for the outgoing government are: Principle based approach on the Distribution related regulations; Recognising Independent Financial Advisors model; Recognising Broker as a distinct distributor giving them delegated powers of underwriting with accountabilities following a graded approach; consolidating multiple channels for rural markets – micro insurance, Prime Minister's Schemes, Distributor rating based on quality parameters by independent rating agencies and others, Baradhwaj said.

While IRDAI have undertaken the first phase of reforms on the non-distribution side so far, they have already started having discussions with the insurance distributors and taken their feedback, said Baradhwaj. According to Bakshi, the IRDAI has introduced a host of changes in its regulatory framework with a view to consolidate numerous regulations under one umbrella as well as take steps towards principle-based regulations.

"The Authority has also envisioned the major Bima Trinity project, which includes Bima Sugam, Bima Vahaak, and Bima Vistar. While the regulatory framework has received in-principle go-ahead from IRDAI, the focus is now on the successful implementation of this project. Changes to the Insurance Act can only be introduced subject to parliamentary approval and these are yet to be taken up at that level," Bakshi said.

On the insurance distribution Bakshi said the government should introduce open architecture for agents – tying with multiple insurers under one licence- and reevaluate the corporate agency tie-ups in bancassurance.

"With a view to avoid monopolistic practices by promoter banks of insurance companies, regulations should cap the maximum business from a single insurer to 25 per cent," Bakshi said.

"As regards increasing the insurance penetration levels in India, the incoming government should incentivise long term savings by providing tax benefits, promote digital platforms for seamless policy purchase, servicing and claims processing with user friendly interfaces in the case of life insurance," Sharrma said.

In the case of general insurance Sharrma said micro-insurance products tailored to the needs of rural and low-income populations should be developed and provide subsidies to make them affordable. Implement advanced data analytics and artificial intelligence (AI) tools to detect and prevent insurance fraud, ensuring transparency. Simplification of claims process, development of disaster risk insurance needs to be done. (Agency)

Source: Yes Punjab

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