Explaining renewal costs

The rising demand for private healthcare

A thriving private healthcare sector can support businesses in keeping their employees healthy and productive. It can also help in meeting the rise in patient demand for primary care, diagnostic services, and specialist treatment.

Use of private medical insurance has risen sharply over the past 18-24 months, and has now stabilised at a higher level than in previous years.[1] This demand is believed to be driven in large part by severe pressure on public sector health services and the strain they are under whilst struggling to recover from the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic.[2,3] The healthcare industry has also seen a shift in customer and provider behaviour, leading to a rise in demand for remote GP consultations.[4]

We're here to help you and your employees stay well and to get quick access to healthcare support when you and they need it.

Sustainable and fair pricing

As a healthcare insurance provider we believe pricing needs to be fair and sustainable to ensure we can continue to offer access to quality care for our members, both now and in the long-term.

However, the private medical insurance industry is seeing higher than usual price increases.[1] Private hospital treatment costs have increased for the sector, and a continued pressure on attracting and maintaining healthcare staff means that wage bills are increasing too. We anticipate that medical wage inflation will continue to rise which will in turn impact the cost of treatment.

When we calculate the renewal subscription, we consider the claims that have been made by a business and we'll also look at the plan benefits a business has and adjust the price to reflect any changes in the cost to us providing access to them. We also consider medical inflation, which is the increase in costs passed onto us by our hospital providers, and is a result of the increased number of treatments, specialist costs and innovation in medical technologies. We work to control any rising costs with AXA Health, our underwriter, who negotiate with our healthcare providers to make sure their charges are fully justified and evidence-based, and they represent good value for money.

Business and member-related increases

When we price our plans, we look at factors such as the number of people covered on the plan and the geographical location of the business. We also look at the members' ages and whether additional family members are covered. Renewal subscriptions will also reflect any plan changes requested at renewal, to allow for how we believe they may impact any claims in the future. As an example, we're more likely to claim as we age, so almost all customers will see an increase in subscription to reflect that trend, even if nothing else changes.

Why keep your cover?

It can be easy to think that healthcare insurance cover is something your business can do without. That's why it's good to remember why you've chosen us and make sure your employees are getting the most from their membership.

Quick access to see a specialist

If you or your employees become unwell, your healthcare insurance cover will help get access to see a specialist and get the treatment needed quickly, with the goal of a speedy return to work.

See a GP when its convenient

See or speak to a GP or registered medical practitioner via video or phone without missing work or taking time off, thanks to AXA Doctor at Hand, powered by Doctor Care Anywhere.*

Online physio support

Trouble with muscles, bones or joints are some of the most common reasons for needing time away from work. [5] You and your employees, aged 18 and over, can get phone or video appointments with a physiotherapist without a GP referral.**

24/7 health support line

Speak to our experienced healthcare practitioners for information and support, such as questions about medication or concerns about a recent diagnosis or upcoming surgery.

Care pathways

Health support to enhance and optimise your healthcare insurance cover. From a range of pathways including digestive health, dermatology, cardiology, neurology and urology, via HBSUK's network of specialists.

Access to discounted gym memberships

Up to 40% off at Hussle and Nuffield Health Fitness & Wellbeing Centres. Terms apply. For details, visit www.thephc.co.uk/gym-discount/

Helping you manage your costs

We want you to be happy with your healthcare insurance cover at a price that you're comfortable with. So, if your renewal subscription isn't what you were expecting, you may be able to adjust the cost of your plan by making some changes to how your cover works:

Increase your excess

With an excess, you decide how much of your employees' yearly claims they would need to contribute towards per year. Including an excess reduces your subscription and the higher the excess level, the greater the reduction.

Consider whether you need the extra options you have included

Removing some of your cover options will reduce your plan costs.

Speak to your intermediary for help with your plan renewal.

**Access to AXA Doctor at Hand is not available to under 18s covered on the policy.*
***This service is available to members aged 18 and over only. Members can access this service without a referral from their GP unless we require further information to assess the eligibility of their claim. Please note that eligibility to use the service is subject to the terms, conditions and underwriting terms applied to their cover. For example, if they are covered on moratorium underwriting, we may require some further information from their registered GP.*

1 Data from the Private Healthcare Information Network (PHIN) shows that within the private healthcare sector procedures paid for with private medical insurance have reached their highest rate since the pandemic, and there were more 'self-pay' (people paying for their own treatment rather than using insurance) admissions in 2022 than in any other year PHIN has data for. PHIN Private market update: May 2023. 2. 1 in 8 go private due to lengthening NHS wait times – ONS – healthcareandprotection.com. 3 Appointments in General Practice, October 2020 & 2022 - digital.nhs.uk. 4 Based on Doctor Care Anywhere data from Q3 2022 and Q2 2023. 5 Sickness absence in the UK labour market – Office for National Statistics, 2022.