

Consultant 41

Email 1

1 May 2012

Dear Sir

I have just been informed by BUPA, that procedures I do on the NHS and have been doing in the private sector since [X] will now require the authorisation of another consultant in another speciality when I am the best trained to do it!

They have de- recognised our speciality of Pain Medicine. [X]

I am sure you will have the BUPA document they have recently sent out, if not let me know and I will ask my secretary to scan and send it to you.

Also PPP (and I think BUPA), will not recognise new consultants for private practise even when they have already achieved recognition in the NHS unless the consultant agrees to only charge what PPP and BUPA have decided to pay. They have not increased their fees for 15 years I believe. This is restrictive since even if the patient wishes to see the consultant of their choice and elect to pay the shortfall. It will not be allowed. This is restrictive.

I appreciate you are not going to report until 2014, but it would be really helpful to have some provisional comments as their practise is markedly affecting patient choice.

Email 2

2 May 2012

Dear Sir/Madam,

I understand the office of fair trading/competition commission is due to carry out an enquiry into the alleged restrictive practices of private medical insurance companies in this country.

I recently e-mailed you with my concerns as regards BUPA as they have sought to restrict the practice of pain medicine in this country substantially.

They only issued these restrictive practices/rules last weekend bring us virtually no time to reply before the implementation and indeed a more cynically little time to refer the matter to you.

It is clear that restrictions in practice are far deeper and more severe than any of us thought.

It stops us from seeing and treating our own patients by making it virtually impossible for such patients to even attend for outpatient appointments without having to bear the penalty.

BUPA also say that I'm no longer fit to perform procedures that I had been doing so for many years having been specifically trained them and I have to refer them to a neurosurgeon or spinal surgeon who are in fact has not been trained to perform the procedures.

This is outrageous.

Recently the comment back to my secretary from BUPA was that if I was no longer a consultant partner then I would not be recognised as a consultant for private practice that is the patient wouldn't even be allowed to come to see me and pay any difference in price that they wished between what I charged and what BUPA were willing to pay.

I have already e-mailed you regarding this issue but I also wish to say there are more serious allegations that could be made against the company and if you are willing then myself and my colleagues in pain medicine would certainly assist you by giving evidence

I would recommend that you take submissions from the Faculty of Pain Medicine and also the President of the British Pain Society as well as the Chairman of the Interventional Pain Group of the British Pain Society.

I hope this is helpful.