

## Consultant 68

11 July 2012

Dear Sir,

I am one of many thousands of private practitioners that are being bullied by the private medical insurance industry especially BUPA (and indirectly so are the patients who are footing the bills).

Most worryingly BUPA are controlling the treatment pathway to patients. For example if a patient has a torn rotator cuff muscle they must have physiotherapy for a minimum of 6 months before being allowed a surgical repair.

BUPA says this practise is based on an independent review by another doctor - who has never seen the patient!

BUPA only recognises and recommends those doctors that will adhere to their fee schedule. Therefore, if a doctor is not happy to accept the current remuneration and wishes to charge outside of the BUPA fee structure they face being blacklisted.

Patients are denied access to these doctors despite the clinical excellence of that doctor - this is contrary to BUPA's own declaration to patients that they will have an excellent service.

GP's can no longer send their patients to a recommended consultant - BUPA now controls whom the patient is allowed to see; which is another example of a poor service to the patient.

Private practise remuneration for doctors has not increased since 1993!

Not even an increase in line with inflation.

This April 2012 BUPA slashed fees by nearly 50% for many surgical procedures.

For example ankle arthroscopy payment was £589 and now is £330.

BUPA have increased the premiums for my patients so where is the money going and is this fair.

In summary there has been a systematic approach to provide a cheaper poorer service to the patient whilst continuing to increase the premiums.