

Consultant 98

2 August 2012

Dear Sir / Madam

Re Issues arising from Bupa's attitude to Osteopaths

I understand that you have been made aware of the issues resulting from the decision by BUPA healthcare to introduce new contracts for Osteopaths on their Network.

In my opinion there are several issues resulting from this.

1/ Firstly it removes the policy holders choice of Osteopath, as it is uneconomical to treat on the fees that have been imposed across the country. Therefore patients will be unable to choose the Osteopath that they would like to see. They will only be able to see an Osteopath that is prepared to treat for an uneconomical amount.

2/ The result of being "non approved" will unfortunately cause patients to believe that the Osteopath is not good enough as it will not be explained that the non approval is purely as a result of the price cap.

3/ This anti -competitive and damaging to the interests of consumers and Osteopaths.

4/ The price cap has been confirmed to me on two occasions during telephone calls to BUPA (I stressed the point very clearly and repeated it) that the price of £30 is the same across the country. Obviously this is ridiculous comparing the costs of Rural Wales to Central London. It is suspicious that BUPA have a central LONDON Osteopath centre that charges way in excess of this amount.

5/ Top up fees are not to be allowed by BUPA. This would be the simple solution and allow the natural forces of costs and competition to set the fees in certain areas as it is done at the moment.

About 830 Osteopaths have resigned from the network in protest showing the strong feeling and the uneconomical potential of this price capping along with the increased administration requirements.