

## Consultant 164

29 October 2012

Dear Sir/Madam,

I became a Consultant in the NHS in [X] and have recently begun exploring options for private practice. The current situation with BUPA who insure a significant share of the private market will make it very difficult or even impossible for me to start and maintain a private practice. Indemnity, equipment and secretarial costs are all higher now than ever. BUPA stipulate that I am unable to decide what fee I can charge patients for surgery. I understand that they also need to make a profit but I don't see why I should not be allowed to pass my fee on to patients. I would be happy to do this upfront and in advance, in a transparent manner so that the patient is fully informed before choosing whether to come and see me. In all other realms of provision of service people providing a service can decide what that service is worth. For BUPA to assume that every cataract surgeon provides an identical service, safety and experience is quite wrong.

If the current situation of BUPA mandating new consultants to sign up to a reduced fee for service is allowed to continue, myself and many of my new consultant colleagues may well chose not to do private practice at all. The result of this will be several fold:

- 1) The quality and breadth of doctors in private practice will reduce.
- 2) Medicine as a career will become so unprofitable that many of the best and brightest who we all hope to rely on to take care of us and our relatives when we are ill will abandon the career in favour of another job.
- 3) A brain drain will ensue and many who have been trained will leave the UK to practice medicine in other countries.

Many thanks for taking this information into account.