

Consultant 175

21 November 2012

Dear Sir

I would like to make a brief comment about BUPA's current approach to "approved" consultants, and their revised fee structure.

I have been an NHS consultant in orthopaedics in [redacted] for [redacted], and have been encouraged by local colleagues and private hospital to develop a private practice. To receive patients funded by BUPA, I would of course have to agree to their reduced rates for both consultation and surgery, in order to become an approved provider.

Having considered this carefully, I conclude that I could not sustain a practice that would cover its costs with the volume of patients I would be likely to see during the first few years; and without such a practice, would be unlikely to ever receive sufficient volume of referrals. I have therefore opted not to offer a service to privately insured or self paying patients. This leaves only one specialist [redacted] surgeon serving [redacted].

This position is far from unique amongst newly qualified consultants, and suggests that the changes enforced by BUPA impact on competition in the provision of private healthcare.