

## Consultant 180

24 November 2012

Dear Sirs,

I wish to draw your attention to a further example of the restrictive and totally unacceptable practice indulged in by BUPA.

A Consultant who has been working at a particular private hospital for about [X] years developed a cataract in his right eye, in [X]. I joined the same hospital [X] years ago. He was in a different speciality to me and we had no clinical overlap. After extensive enquiries he asked me to undertake his cataract operation, which was in [X]. The surgery went well, and his vision was restored in his right eye. The operation was performed at the same private hospital at which we both worked, and we chose this hospital because of our confidence in its clinical excellence.

Recently, he developed a cataract in his left eye. He again wanted me to undertake the second operation at the same hospital.

On contacting BUPA for authorisation for the procedure, he was informed that I was not a BUPA fee assured consultant, although I was a BUPA approved consultant (and have been so for [X] years). BUPA tried to persuade him to have his operation in [X], in [X], approximately [X] miles from the hospital we had chosen, under the care of an Optician chain known as Optical Express. His operation would be done by an Ophthalmologist unknown to him, whom he would only meet on the day of his surgery. Of paramount importance was the fact that the fees would be met in full by BUPA.

He felt that this care proposed by BUPA was totally unacceptable and decided to have his operation under my care at the original private hospital, and face whatever fee shortfall might occur.

BUPA maintain that they provide excellent care, driven by quality. The above case demonstrates the fallacy of their position which is in fact purely financially driven. They are using their massive market share to impose unacceptable clinical care on their customers and to restrict their choice of consultant and hospitals.

I hope that you will consider this case in your investigation.