

Consultant 205

4 February 2013

I am an [X] consultant practising in the NHS and Private Practice.

I believe that some private insurers are harming patients by insisting that they see some consultants against the patient and general practitioner (GP) wishes.

BUPA seem the worst offenders in this.

I have had several patients who wanted to see me and have been referred by their GP's but BUPA told them that they cannot see me. This despite being an assured provider for BUPA and I have agreed to stay within their fee schedule.

Indeed, BUPA wrote to me to say that unless I reduce my fees to £180 for a new patient consultation then they would de-recognise me as a BUPA consultant. I tried to fight this and explained that the most common fee for new patient consultations by consultant ENT surgeons in [X] was £200. To my knowledge BUPA have not asked other consultants to reduce fees but why they have singled me out, I do not know.

I am powerless to stand against the blackmail of the insurance companies. They are not working for the benefit of patients, patients want to see a doctor of their own choosing of one recommended by their GP, and this is becoming increasingly difficult.