DRN-5583647

The complaint

Mrs G is unhappy with the premium she was quoted to renew her private medical insurance policy, underwritten by BUPA Insurance Limited ('the policy') in 2024. She's also unhappy that she wasn't given a breakdown of how the premium was calculated.

What happened

The details of this complaint are well known to both parties, so I won't repeat them again here. I'll focus on giving the reasons for my decision.

What I've decided – and why

I've considered all the available evidence and arguments to decide what's fair and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint.

I understand Mrs G feels very strongly that BUPA hasn't acted fairly so I know she'll be disappointed that for the following reasons, I'm not upholding her complaint.

The policy was due to renew on 1 August 2024, and the premium quoted for the policy increased by around £1,200 from the year before. Given the increase and that Mrs G hadn't made any claims on the policy during the previous year, I can understand why she queried the increase.

BUPA has provided the Financial Ombudsman Service with a breakdown of how the premium was calculated.

I'm satisfied that the core / basic price of the policy (taking into account the factors that BUPA explained to Mrs G in its final response letter dated July 2024) increased by around 19%. And from that BUPA applied a no claim claims discount of 27% (which is in line with the policy terms) and a group discount (the percentage of which Mrs G is aware of).

Having considered the breakdown provided by BUPA, I'm satisfied it's accurately calculated the premium in line with its pricing factors. And that Mrs G hasn't been treated any differently to another BUPA member in the same circumstances.

Mrs G would like to see the detailed breakdown of how the premium was calculated and, in the circumstances, I can understand why. But the Financial Conduct Authority's Dispute Resolution: Complaints Sourcebook ('DISP'), which sets out how complaints should be handled, says at DISP 3.5.9 (2) and 3.5.10 that the Financial Ombudsman Service can accept certain information in confidence.
I'm satisfied that the pricing information BUPA has given us is genuinely commercially sensitive and can be considered - and accepted by us - in confidence.

I'm also satisfied that BUPA acted fairly by telling Mrs G the renewal price she'd be paying for the policy for the insurance year 1 August 2024 – 31 July 2025 (and by not including a breakdown of how this was calculated at the time). That's normal industry practice.

When Mrs G queried how the premium was calculated BUPA also provided some further information, including some of the factors influencing the price and the percentage changes from the previous year. I think that's fair and reasonable. I wouldn't ordinarily expect an insurer to provide a granular breakdown of how the premium was calculated as it's commercially sensitive information.

I know BUPA did provide a breakdown of the basic price of the policy the year before along with the discounts it applied but I don't think it was under any obligation (legal, regulatory or otherwise) to do so when the policy was due to renew in August 2024 or that by doing this for Mrs G previously, meant it needed to do so again.

Mrs G has recently provided the Financial Ombudsman Service with a quote she received from BUPA for private medical insurance dated April 2025, which is around £4,000 per year less than the renewal price of the policy.

However, I'm not persuaded that this quote means that the renewal price she received was unfair or had been calculated incorrectly. The more recent quote was calculated at a different time than when the policy renewed, included a 10% health and lifestyle discount and was offered on different terms and on a different underwriting basis.

I hope it reassures Mrs G that her complaint has been impartially considered by someone independent of the parties.

My final decision

I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mrs G to accept or reject my decision before 25 September 2025.

David Curtis-Johnson
Ombudsman