REDEFINING YOUR MEDICAL COVER AT THE DATE OF RENEWAL IS A HEALTHY HABIT

There was a time when utmost people in our country didn't see health insurance as critical. After two tumultuous times of the COVID- 19 pandemic, still, this is no longer the case.

As an element of constancy amid uncertain events, health insurance has claimed its due place as an essential part of fiscal planning for every household. The coming important step in this evolutionary process is to insure that one has the best-fit health plan.

Last year, India witnessed a 14 percent medical affectation rate, the loftiest in Asia. As a result, health insurance premiums rocketed, making protection more precious for consumers. Rising medical costs make for a great reason to estimate one's health insurance needs. The best time to do this is when your policy is over for renewal. This helps you avoid any need for an additional waiting period for enhanced coverage.

Renewal time is when a responsible policyholder should choose to pause, reevaluate and considerately upgrade. Here's what you need to keep in mind to get maximum coverage when upgrading your existing plan.

REASSESS YOUR SUM ASSURED

Renewal should be treated analogous to a periodic physical check- up. You go to the doctor once a year to have your health assessed. Also, before the policy renewal date, you should review and estimate your health insurance coverage.

Your current health insurance coverage may not be acceptable to meet all of the healthcare needs that could arise. Maybe it isn't in line with the apace rising costs of healthcare. Every insurer gives you the option of increasing your sum assured at the time of renewal.

The benefit is that there's no waiting period, unlike switching to a new health insurance plan, which may have a four- year awaiting period for pre-existing conditions. In the post-Covid world, a health insurance policy worth at least Rs 1 crore is essential for every being.

Consider porting

However, or the level of service you're receiving from your current insurer, you can use the time of renewal to port your policy, if your current policy has started falling short of your requirements.

This means you can transfer your current policy to a different insurance company of your choice while keeping the continuity benefits you've accrued.

Remember that portability can only be done at the time of renewal — also, you must notify your current insurance company 45 days before your policy's renewal date.

DECLARE ANY NEW ILLNESS OR CONDITION

Renewal of health insurance is basically a new contract with the same terms and conditions as in the former time. Still, your health profile may change dramatically over the time.

However, you'll notice that while the insurer cannot load the policy due to a negative claims experience (due to Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India regulations), it can ask documents information before agreeing to renew the health insurance policy, if you read the policy words and conditions precisely.

To be on the safer side and in the spirit of the principle of utmost good faith, it's advised to notify the insurer about any similar changes. Allow it to make a decision on your policy grounded on that, rather than risking rejection at the time of claim. This ensures that you get maximum coverage indeed in the most unpredictable situations.

All in all, renewal time is the time to go through your insurance needs with a fine- tooth comb and to ramp up the protection where necessary. The earlier you maximise your coverage, the better it's as it saves you the threat of an exaggerated premium.

So, be careful and make the best use of your health plan renewal — it can be quite an occasion to guard yourself and your family.