

## Rising no. of people seek OPD insurance during 3rd covid wave

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Chennai: Health insurers see rising demand for Out Patient Department (OPD) covers on the back of lower rate of hospitalization and higher doctor consultation, diagnostic investigations and checkups during the third Covid wave. ICICI Lombard has recorded a 30% month-on-month rise in sales volume of its OPD rider policy, which was launched last year. Sanjay Datta, who heads the underwriting and claims division of the privately-owned general insurance company said, "Some illness does not require hospitalisa-

tion and can be diagnosed and treated in an OPD and these expenses can be significant, especially post the pandemic outbreak. There is a strong demand for these products

### STRONG DEMAND

among customers in metro cities." OPD cover is offered as a rider, which is an additional coverage that can be opted by insured on payment of extra premium over and above their base policy. This rider is available both on new purchase of policy as well as renewal of existing policy. Insurers say the demand for OPD is for both Co-

vid and non-Covid illnesses.

Nikhil Kamdar, appointed actuary, Digit Insurance, said demand in OPD covers spiked by 120% in December 2021 compared to November 2021. Between December 2021 and January 2022, Digit saw a rise of 430% in number of non-hospitalization claims.

Bajaj Allianz General Insurance which launched its OPD cover in December, 2021, said it has recorded sales beyond its set target. Gurdeep Singh Batra, its head of retail underwriting said with a one-month waiting period, the claims have already started coming in February.