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Headline :- 100% CASHLESS HEALTH CLAIMS LIKELY SOON

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The insurance regulator and General Insurance Council also plan to introduce a common network of hospitals for all medical claims.

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) is working with industry players to introduce a common network of hospitals for all health insurance policies and a 100% cashless settlement system. Right now, cashless settlement is available in 49% of hospitals in India. Insurers regularly change their list of associated hospitals due to high medical bills and fraudulent claims. The insurance regulator and the General Insurance Council (GIC) intend to come up with a nationwide common cashless hospital network to ease the health insurance claim settlement process.

The GIC has set up a committee to establish a common empanelment of hospitals. The committee is also planning to have a uniform rate at which all hospitals will be on-boarded by insurers, instead of the current separate agreements with varied



rates between different hospitals and insurance companies.

"Once fully implemented, every insurance company's customer will have access to a single, integrated network," says Shanai Ghosh, MD & CEO of Zuno General Insurance. Ghosh says a single integrated

network will benefit customers. "We will be able to ensure that the claims experience is seamless and hassle-free. Irrespective of which insurance they hold, they will have access to all cashless hospitals of the industry," she says.

Will this bring down the price

of your health insurance policy?

"Industry-level pricing for this unified network should result in more competitive pricing for medical services. A lot of frauds that happen through the reimbursement channel can be arrested. There will also be consolidated and structured industry-level data for better analytics. All these can lead to a reduction in the overall cost of claims. This could reduce prices or at least partly mitigate the impact of medical inflation," says Ghosh.

"The industry would work together to ensure that all hospitals are available as part of the cashless network to ensure that the out-of-pocket expenses are minimised greatly and the quantum of frauds are minimised. This would also ensure that the genuine customers face minimal inconvenience while availing of medical treatments at hospitals,"



says Parthanil Ghosh, President, Retail Business, HDFC ERGO General Insurance.

The regulator is also planning to roll out a 100% cashless health insurance claim settlement system. Currently, the cashless settlement is roughly 65-70% of total claims.

A bad claim experience in health insurance often deters many prospective buyers from buying a health insurance policy as they do not find insurance policies completely reliable. Any significant improvement on this front can restore policyholders' confidence. Rupinderjit Singh, Vice-President, Retail Health, ACKO General Insurance, says, "This will also ensure uniform access to hospitals, irrespective of the provider, to enable more trust, thus increasing penetration of insurance in the country."

"This is a transformative initiative with significant benefits for policyholders. The nationwide cashless settlement system will not only ease the claims process, but also reduce financial burden for the insured, while also contributing to the mitigation of fraud," says Tapan Singhel, CEO of Bajaj Allianz General Insurance.

— Anulekha Ray