

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
FINANCE  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2999  
ANSWERED ON:19.08.2011  
SRAVANA SAKA HEALTH INSURANCE SCHEMES  
Meghwal Shri Arjun Ram ;Owaisi Shri Asaduddin

**Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether only fifteen per cent people of the country are covered under the health insurance policies;
- (b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) whether the Health Insurance Policies cover only hospitalization expenses;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (e) whether the IRDA has suggested to include the expenses incurred on OPD treatments and child birth; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof alongwith the steps taken/being taken by the Government to enhance the coverage of Health Insurance Policies?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA)

(a) & (b): The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) has reported that as per data available with them in the year 2009-10, the total number of persons covered by health insurance is 5,48,93,453 i.e. around 4.5% of the population. This excludes persons covered by other forms of employer sponsored healthcare financing systems such as ESI, CGHS, Railways etc., as they do not fall under IRDA's purview.

(c) & (d): The health insurance basically covers expenses incurred towards inpatient hospitalisation treatment. Thus, most of the health insurance policies do not include out-patient expenses or routine medical expenditure. Further, insurance is a risk management mechanism to cover sudden unforeseen contingencies and does not cover expected losses as otherwise such losses will become huge and the premiums will become costlier to the policyholders. However, some of the new policies have been introduced which offer comprehensive health insurance covers inclusive of Out-Patient expenses etc. subject to sub-limits.

(e) & (f): The IRDA has reported that it does not mandate insurance companies to issue any specific policy. Policies are designed by insurers themselves and are approved by the IRDA. However, IRDA encourages innovative products which provide comprehensive Health Insurance that not only goes beyond covering inpatient hospitalization expenses but also provides additional coverage such as maternity etc., at financially viable price.