

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
FINANCE
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:360
ANSWERED ON:26.08.2011
HEALTH INSURANCE FOR SENIOR CITIZENS
Joshi Shri Pralhad Venkatesh

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the mediclaim policies/special policies for senior citizens offered by the Public Sector Insurance Companies;
- (b) whether the Government has received complaints against the Public and Private Sector Insurance Companies for treating senior citizens as ineligible for mediclaim policies;
- (c) if so, the details thereof for the last three years and the current financial year, Company-wise and the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether the Government has received requests from various quarters including senior citizens to change the norms for their coverage under such policies;
- (e) if so, the details thereof, alongwith the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (f) the corrective steps taken/being taken by the Government in this direction?

Answer

THE FINANCE MINISTER (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE)

(a) to (f): A Statement is laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha.

Statement in reply to Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 360 regarding 'Health Insurance for Senior Citizens' raised by Shri Pralhad Joshi, MP to be answered on 26th August, 2011.

(a) All the Public Sector General Insurance Companies have specially designed policies for senior Citizens at the entry level in the age bracket of 60 to 80 years namely "Varishtha Bima Yojana" by National Insurance Company Limited, "Health of Privileged Elderly (HOPE)" by Oriental Insurance Company Limited and "Senior Citizens Mediclaim Policy" by New India Assurance Company Limited and United India Insurance Company Limited. As in the case of regular mediclaim insurance policies, there is no age limit for renewals of these policies and are continued throughout the life-time of the assured.

(a) & (c): The details of the complaints received from senior citizens are annexed. Reasons for refusal to renew health insurance policies, inter-alia, include age-limit, break in insurance due to belated renewal, dishonor of renewal premium cheque by bank etc.

(d) to (f): There were many concerns with respect to availability of health insurance for senior citizens. In this connection, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) had constituted a Senior Citizens Committee in 2007. Based on the recommendations of the Committee, the IRDA had instructed insurers in April, 2007 to allow entry in health insurance policy at least till 65 years of age. In August 2008, IRDA mandated establishment of a separate channel to address health insurance related grievances of senior citizens. Further, vide instructions issued in March, 2009, IRDA instructed that apart from the entry age of 65 years, the denial of health insurance to senior citizens on any grounds should be in writing with reasons furnished and recorded and the premium charged to senior citizens should be fair, justified and transparent and duly disclosed upfront. As the most recent initiative, IRDA, while approving health insurance products, advises all general insurers to ensure that there is no exit age in the policy which ensures that no one is denied health insurance merely on grounds of age.

Annexure

Details of complaints company-wise for the last 3 years are as under:

2010-11 2009-10 2008-09

Name of Insurer Number of complaints

Bharti Axa General Ins. 1 0 0
ICICI Lombard Gen. sIns. 3 0 0

Iffco Tokio	1 0 0
National Insurance Co.	2 0 3
New India Assurance Co.	5 1 2
Oriental Insurance Co.	3 1 1
Reliance General Ins.	1 0 0
United India Ins. Co.	6 0 2

Total: 22 2 8

Details of the complaints company-wise for the current financial year w.e.f. 1.4.2011 to 17.8.2011 is given below:

Name of Insurer No. of complaints

Apollo Munich	2
Bajaj Allianz General Ins.	5
Cholamandalam MS General	2
ICICI Lombard Gen. Ins.	4
Iffco Tokio	1
National Insurance Co.	12
Royal Sundaram	1
Star Health & Allied Ins.	2
New India Assurance Co.	10
Oriental Insurance Co.	10
United India Ins. Co.	9
Universal Sompo	14

Total: 72