

STUDENT GROUP HEALTH INSURANCE IN COLLEGES-ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED BY 1ST YEAR UNDER-GRADUATE INTER-DISCIPLINARY STUDENTS

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INTRODUCTION

INDIA is a country with about 47 central, 353 state, and 123 deemed and 246 private universities. There are however, no health insurance plans available for college students by the insurance companies even though travel insurance/ overseas mediclaim policies to students going abroad for higher education is quite popular among the students. Both the private and public companies are providing such policies. But policies for students of universities of India are not available. There is such a vast market which is left untapped by highly competitive insurance sector. The insurance companies can make huge profits by providing group insurance policies for students.

What is a Health Insurance?

Health insurance is a type of insurance coverage that covers the cost of an insured individual's medical and surgical expenses. Depending on the type of health insurance coverage, either the insured pays costs out of pocket and is then reimbursed, or the insurer makes payment directly to the provider. The policy covers hospitalization and domiciliary hospitalization expenses. The policy generally covers boarding, nursing, diagnostic and medicine expenses. Some insurers also cover pre- hospitalization and post- hospitalization expenses.

Group Health Insurance Policies

Group health insurance coverage is a type of health policy that is purchased by an employer and is offered to eligible employees of the company and to eligible family members of employees.

OBJECTIVE: To start a Group health insurance policy in colleges to protect students from any kind of ailment or disease and to spread awareness amongst students and their families about the benefits of having a health insurance in a country where medical expenses are sky-rocketing.

MAIN AREAS OF RESEARCH

- 1.) What is group health insurance?
- 2.) How do these policies work and their benefits?
- 3.) Which companies provide group health insurance policies in India?
- 4.) What challenges these policies will face if started for students?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For this research project data was collected on convenient and random basis from college students. Pre structured questionnaires were used to collect the relevant information from a sample of 78

students of which 29 students were sports students and 49 students were non-sports students. The data collected then have been analysed using frequency and percentages for analysis.

CONCLUSION AND POSSIBLE SOLUTION

Students do know about the different aspects of insurance and what insurance is all about, but, certainly, there is a lack of sensitivity towards the importance of insurance. The absence of the fact that ‘insurance is a necessity and not a luxury’ can clearly be seen from the analysis. It is observed that a very low percentage of families have policies. This shows the need of awareness among people that insurance is not just a policy, it is also a one of the safe saving instruments, and furthermore, it gives tax benefits to the policy holder. These features can help the families to have a well-secured future. Students need to be aware of the actual working and benefits of an insurance policy. **Possible solutions that might help in setting up a group insurance policy at the college level:** Since in a group health insurance policies adopted in workplaces, the premiums are contributed by both the employer and the employee. Here, in the institutions, the same custom can be followed. Institutions can contribute certain percentage of amount of premium and can seek contribution from the parents of students through modifying fee structure.

Awareness and willingness amongst the families of students can be raised by having a range of premiums depending on the incomes of families. For eg- having a range of Rs. 300- Rs.700 per annum depending on income earning capacities of families.

Also, there are a number of government insurance policies that can be approached by the students as well as by their families. One such government policy is **PRADHAN MANTRI SURAKSHA BEEMA YOJANA**. It is Indian Government’s cheapest accidental insurance cover. The scheme also covers both partial and permanent disability cover. This scheme is available to those between the ages of 18 and 70 years and they must have a bank account. The annual premium of the scheme is Rs.12 excluding the service tax. Rs.2 lakh is paid to the nominee if the subscriber dies in an accident or if she is fully disabled. If the subscriber meets with an accident and suffers partial permanent disability, then Rs.1 lakh is paid.

To conclude Companies must provide mediclaim to educational institutions and it must be made mandatory for each such institution to insure its students at the time of admission of the students. Such an initiative will not only improve the conditions of health facilities in India but will also lead India towards a healthier society.

POLICY IMPLICATION OF THIS RESEARCH in 2020 these plans were launched

1. **VIDYARTHI Mediclaim for Student Policy From National Insurance Company Limited**

<https://www.irdai.gov.in/ADMINCMS/cms/Uploadedfiles/NATIONAL15/Vidyarthi%20Mediclaim%20for%20Student.pdf>

2. **Star Health Insurance Company: College Student Care Insurance IRDAI : IRDA/NL-HLT/SHAI/P-H/V.I/101/13-14.**

College Student Care Insurance IRDAI

<https://www.starhealth.in > student-accidental-insurance>