

# Why Should Indians Buy A Health Insurance Policy Amid Coronavirus?



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The coronavirus pandemic has rattled the world's health industry and India is no exception. With only 14% to 16% of Indians having health insurance and the Indian federal government spending on health at roughly 1.13% of the GDP as of 2019, the case for opting for health insurance as a must-have financial service is impregnable.

A population of 1.38 billion people requires tailor-made efforts to fill significant gaps that exist in the healthcare facilities available to Indian citizens.

The Government's National Health Protection Mission, called *Ayushman Bharat Prime Minister's Jan Arogya Yojana*, is aimed at providing insurance to the underserved.

Another popular project of the government is the *Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana* for insurance to the workers in the unorganized sector which too attempts to cover the twin challenges of affordability and accessibility.

While the two government programmes are works in progress, the citizens out of the purview of the two have private health insurance as their only resort to protect themselves.

Let's look at what health insurance does in times such as the COVID-19, and what your policy should look like.

## Timely and Affordable Insurance

The pricing of any insurance product is based on the benefits it offers. The insurer needs to choose a policy based on affordability and health status, thinks Upasana Kamineni Konidela, the MD of Family Health Plan Insurance.

She advises opting for a regular health check and understanding your health risk to better your health status. Once that is established, she recommends people choose an optimum cover in terms of sum assured based on affordability.

Kamineni Konidela categorizes timing as key and suggests taking a policy at an early age than pursuing one at a time when you require hospitalization.

## Insurance Offering Comprehensive Cover

The cover of the policy being looked at should be comprehensive in terms of no sub limits, lower waiting periods and should be sufficient for the family or an individual, think Pankaj Arora, the MD and CEO of Raheja QBE General Insurance.

One should look at non-medical items being excluded from the coverage and alternatively the policy should offer a fixed daily allowance to cover such out of pocket expenses at a reasonable additional cost, he suggests.

## Insurance with Incentives

Batwal thinks while this is an ideal time to opt for a health insurance policy, it is advisable to look at it from a larger perspective and ensure you maximize the value for the investment you make in these financial testing times.

Several products in the market offer a comprehensive cover to aid in prevention, protection, and recuperation. He advises looking for products that provide good financial and other incentives or engagement for you and your family to stay healthy and also support in recovery and recuperation.

Arora recommends looking at incentives such as Cumulative Bonus where the sum insured benefit under the policy increases by a certain percentage for each claim free year.