

Insurance Facility for Members

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide COHPA members with some background information on the new insurance facility which is now available.

Background

Plans for an insurance facility for COHPA members were introduced at the AGM in June 2005. Information gathering and some case studies took place during 2005-2006, culminating in a special insurance policy, designed specifically for members and arranged by an insurance professional who thoroughly understands what commercial occupational health providers actually do.

The aims of this facility are two fold:

- to provide members with a source of correct insurance cover specific to our needs
- to obtain the best premium levels via bulk buying and promoting a better understanding of the risks that we face as an industry amongst insurers

Many members have great difficulty in arranging the correct insurance covers. There are two main reasons for this:

1. The insurers/brokers they dealt with did not fully understand the profession, and therefore were not able to correctly advise on what risks the businesses were exposed to and therefore what cover was really needed. This left members vulnerable financially to potential losses.
2. Members found that if cover was available, it was extremely expensive. This is because the insurers who do offer cover, particularly for malpractice and professional negligence, appear to rate occupational health on the same basis as higher risk areas of the medical profession, and therefore did not truly reflect the actual potential risk of a claim.

There is also some confusion amongst industry providers regarding the gaps/overlaps between malpractice cover, professional cover and business cover, and the true requirements for commercial occupational health providers.

This great diversity in approach to the perceived risks that OH providers face leaves many providers exposed by default. Members looked to COHPA for guidance.

COHPA therefore approached a number of potential brokers and decided to appoint Brett & Randall, who had already demonstrated their understanding of the profession with COHPA members.

The Facility

Brett & Randall have spoken to many insurers and have now been able to put into place a number of policies which provide exactly the right protection for occupational health providers. These are bespoke wordings which ensure that the usual gaps in cover are protected, but they can also be adapted to reflect the differing needs of individual companies.

Brett & Randall will also provide a free of charge contract vetting service to advise on the insurance requirements of new business tenders,

The COHPA insurance facility is only available to COHPA members.

Areas for consideration

Office Policy – Most brokers provide a standard office package policy to provide cover for the office contents and Employers and Public Liability. The office policy is designed to cover employees whilst working at the office premises. Most occupational health consultants either work permanently or temporarily at **their customers premises**, not just their own, and therefore, the standard office policy may not adequately protect them for injury to employees.

The COHPA policy automatically extends to cover your employees wherever they are working within the UK, including permanent placements.

Medical Malpractice – Some Occupational Health companies take the view that the doctors and nurses they employ have malpractice cover, so the company doesn't need to insure in its own right. If a claim occurs however, the client would sue them as the company whom they had the contract with to provide the occupational health, or at the very least, you would be exposed to defence costs from a joint action

The COHPA policy automatically extends to include the company's liability for malpractice by any of its employees, for up to £500,000

Professional Indemnity – The malpractice cover does not provide protection against errors and omissions by doctors, nurses or clerical staff. It is therefore advisable to take out a separate professional indemnity policy to cover this. Many members have found that the only insurers willing to offer professional indemnity are the ones who specialise in medical risks. These however can be expensive, as occupational health is rated in a similar way to the higher risk medical sectors which they encounter more frequently.

The COHPA facility can provide quotations for professional indemnity, but because the malpractice section is already covered, the professional indemnity premium can be much more competitive than one offering the full medical indemnity

Motor Insurance – If you provide company cars, management of the fleet and the insurance aspects can be time consuming. It can also become expensive if the

claims are not properly managed. Brett & Randall are able to provide a complete fleet risk management service with competitive insurance premiums by managing the claims carefully.

Other Insurances – There are also a number of other areas which are important to consider, such as Employee Benefits, Private Health Insurance, Employment Law Protection and others.

Tender / Contract Vetting – When quoting for new contracts, many of them have specific insurance requirements, some of which appear to be very onerous.

Many customers place these conditions into the tender on the advice of their brokers or solicitors, and sometimes are neither practical nor appropriate to the specific contract which is under consideration.

Brett & Randall provide a contract vetting as an integral part of their service, where they will advise whether the insurance requirements are acceptable, and if additional cover is necessary to comply with these, will also provide quotations for the cover. This valuable service is free of charge to members using the COHPA insurance facility.

The Next Step

Brett & Randall will be happy to meet with you and discuss your specific requirements in more detail. They will give you an appraisal of your current insurance, highlight any gaps in cover, and advise you how these can be addressed. In addition, they will provide you with a quotation for the COHPA facility so that you can compare both the cover and the cost against your current arrangements.

If you would like to take advantage of this facility, please contact

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