

Corporate health cover

■ Be prepared, health insurance laws in Dubai look likely to change, meaning employers will have greater obligations to provide coverage for their employees, says **Andrew Cole, CEO of Prosperity Insurance brokers.** ■

This looks to be the year when Dubai will follow in the footsteps of Abu Dhabi regarding health insurance legislation.

The health insurance law issued by the emirate of Abu Dhabi in recent years was the first step towards establishing a global standard in health care and medical services in the UAE.

The new law provided medical coverage for all expatriates working and residing in Abu Dhabi as well as for visitors staying more than two months. I am told that the Executive Council of Dubai will pass a similar law in the coming months

so although today there is no obligation on employers to provide Health Insurance for their employees, this new law will probably come into effect in 2011.

Once this law has been passed in both Abu Dhabi and Dubai, it's likely the other five emirates will follow suit.

The first phase of the law in Abu Dhabi came into effect 1 July 2006 and was applicable to all local, federal and quasi-government organisations, as well as all private companies with more than 1000 expatriate employees.

The second phase of the law, which came into effect on 1 January 2007, made it mandatory for all expatriates residing and working in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi to have health insurance provided by their employer or sponsor.

EMPLOYER OBLIGATIONS

If – or more likely ‘when’—this new law passes in Dubai later this year, all employers and sponsors will be responsible for the procurement of health insurance coverage and possession of valid health insurance at all times for their employees and their families (one spouse and three children under 18), inclusive of registration fees, as well as the cost of the policy and for the cost of all health care services that are provided to persons on his sponsorship in the event that such a person is not covered by a valid health insurance policy.

Obtaining or renewing sponsorship of any resident expatriate will not be permitted without a valid health insurance policy.

The law also forbids the employer or sponsor from passing on the cost

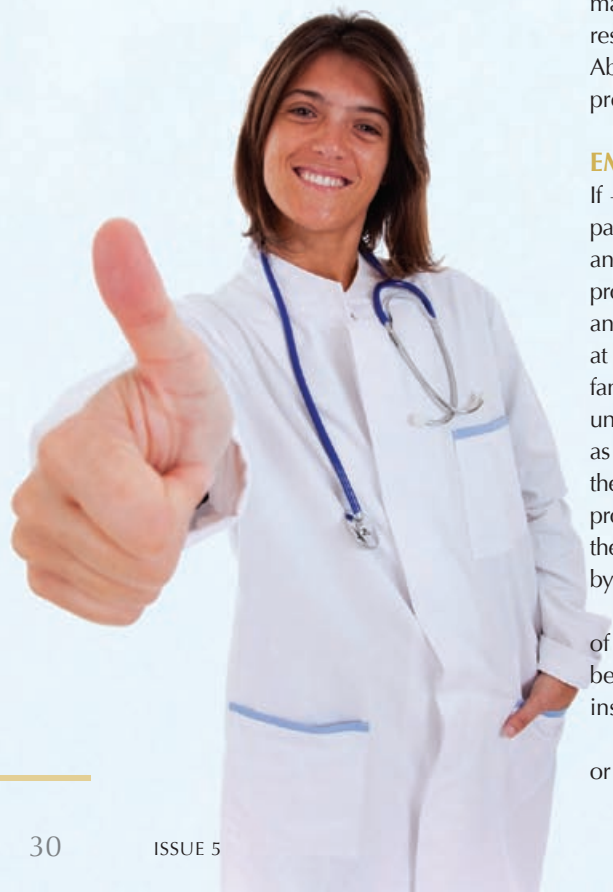
of health insurance to their employees and dependents, such an act will be considered a violation of the law and shall hold the employer or sponsor subject to investigation and penalties. Complaints may be filed at the Complaints Unit at the Health Authority Abu Dhabi (www.haad.ae) if such a case occurs.

The insurance policies will be valid for one year (the insured are not entitled to claim back the premium). The policies contain basic health care services, excluded services, additional services, maximum coverage, procedure of complaints guidelines and a co-payment to be paid by the insured. The health insurance scheme shall not replace any existing obligation to procure insurance by way of Workers Compensation Coverage as per Law No. 8 for the year 1980.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

It's also important to know the obligations of health care providers and employers in emergency situations.

An authorised health care provider shall provide health care to any injured party, whether or not their insurance covers the treatment in the case of a medical emergency. The cost can be recovered from the health insurance company if insured, or from the employer/sponsor if not insured. See the break out box overleaf for a sample of coverage available from the lowest level up to comprehensive levels. The protection provided at the lowest level of health care is an Abu Dhabi plan, this is a simple product for low income earners and the lowest premium we have found for this product is AED 600 per annum. This would cover the basic needs of health care and is acceptable by the government for residency in Abu Dhabi. The premium level obviously increases with the level



of cover required, the type of protection you would like, the geographical coverage of your plan, your age and health. (In Abu Dhabi pre-existing conditions are covered by providers as directed by the government which means cover can cost several times the price it does in Dubai where pre-existing conditions are not covered – yet.)


THE PRICE IS RIGHT

Companies must consider cost when deciding on coverage. The estimate is that AED 4 billion per annum will be paid in insurance premiums in the UAE.

Choosing the right medical insurance company will determine how well you and your staff are protected in the event of accidents or illness.

It is therefore sensible to first look at all the suitable alternatives, one option is to consult an expert insurance broker.

The number of insurance companies offering international medical insurance plans is ever-increasing alongside the growth in the global expatriate community. Also the number of plans offered by insurers is increasing rapidly.

There are many different types of international medical insurance plan that can include any of the following items: Inpatient, Outpatient, Dental, Maternity, Evacuation, Chronic Conditions. It is important that you understand clearly the different types of coverage available. Your broker or the product providers would be happy to discuss your requirements and tailor a solution. 



Andrew Cole, CEO of Prosperity Insurance Brokers

Sample of coverage available from the lowest level up to comprehensive, prices average

VISITOR PLAN

- Annual limit AED 150,000
- Validity: 40/70/100/190 days
- Eligibility: Visitors as per Ministerial Decision No 322/2008
- Geographical limit: UAE
- Emergency medical conditions only
- Pre-existing and/or chronic medical conditions are not covered
- Maternity, dental and optical: Not covered
- Post traumatic dental treatment (accidental during the policy within UAE only) will be covered at 100 per cent at Network Providers only
- 100 per cent coverage within network, no coverage outside network, unless emergency
- Repatriation of mortal remains to the country of origin: Up to AED 7,000

ABU DHABI PLAN

Price: AED 600 pa regardless age or gender

- Annual limit AED 250,000
- Geographical limit: Emirate of Abu Dhabi
- Emergency cases covered in UAE
- Maternity covered 100 per cent within network (AED 500 deductible for delivery)
- 100 per cent coverage within network, no coverage outside network
- Applicable for expatriates residing

in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, with a monthly total package ≤ 4,000 AED with accommodation or ≤ 5,000 without accommodation

UAE PLAN

- Ages 26-30 36-40 41-45 56-60
- Male 3,268 3,923 4,650 12,512
- Female 4,029 4,676 5,884 14,224
- Annual limit AED 500,000
- Geographical limit: UAE
- Emergency cases covered in selected countries
- Maternity covered 100 per cent within network
- Dental benefits-optional (for groups only)
- 100 per cent coverage within network, no coverage outside network
- Annual breast cancer and prostate cancer screening

REGIONAL PLAN

- Annual limit AED 1,000,000
- Geographical limit: Worldwide excluding USA, Canada and Europe
- Emergency cases covered Worldwide
- Maternity covered up to the plan limit within UAE and AED 10,000 outside UAE
- Dental benefits-optional (for groups only)
- 100 per cent coverage within network, 80 per cent reimbursement outside network

- Global emergency service provided by Assist America
- Annual breast cancer and prostate cancer screening

INTERNATIONAL PLAN

- Annual limit AED 2,500,000
- Geographical limit: World excl. US, Canada
- Emergency cases covered Worldwide
- Maternity covered up to the plan limit within UAE and AED 10,000 outside UAE
- Dental benefits-optional
- 100 per cent coverage within network, 80 per cent reimbursement outside network
- Global emergency service provided by Assist America
- Annual breast cancer and prostate cancer screening

GLOBAL PLAN

- Annual limit AED 5,000,000
- Geographical limit: Worldwide
- Maternity covered up to the plan limit within UAE and AED 15,000 outside UAE
- Dental benefits-optional
- Global emergency service provided by Assist America
- 100 per cent coverage within network, 80 per cent reimbursement outside network
- Annual breast cancer and prostate cancer screening

INSURANCE PLAN COSTS PER ANNUM IN DIRHAM

UAE Plan

Age Range	26-30	36-40	41-45	56-60
Male	3,268	3,923	4,650	12,512
Female	4,029	4,676	5,884	14,224

Regional Plan

Male	4,419	5,286	6,244	16,965
Female	5,390	6,281	7,879	19,163

International Plan

Male	6,049	7,209	8,471	23,295
Female	7,284	8,520	10,659	26,104

Global Plan

Male	10,841	12,786	14,828	42,086
Female	12,607	14,906	18,519	46,189

Premier Plan

Male	15,876	18,203	20,610	54,278
Female	17,852	20,704	25,035	58,914