



Government of Bermuda
Ministry of Health

Bermuda Health Plan FAQs Update

What is it all about?

Lots of people are talking about the Bermuda Health Plan. You may be wondering what it is all about.

The public consultation is asking two questions:

1. What should be included in Bermuda's core health insurance plan?
2. How should we transition to a more efficient system?

Why is any change needed?

Since 1970 Bermuda has had a mandated basic, or 'core', insurance plan called the Standard Health Benefit or SHB. It includes mostly hospital services. This is not enough when you need other healthcare like prescriptions or office visits. Also, this basic plan is not available for sale on its own, so it's of limited use.

How will it affect me?

The Bermuda Health Plan wants to make sure the core plan includes benefits to keep you healthy and gives people the protection they really need.

The reforms seek to add benefits to the core plan like prescriptions and more office visits. This would make everyone's core coverage better without taking anything away.

For example, FutureCare would still cover \$2,000 for prescriptions and could even go up to \$2,400. HIP could get some

prescription benefits, and better office visits coverage.

In short, the core plan will include more benefits. So supplemental benefits in private insurers' HIP, the Government HIP and FutureCare will actually be improved.

Private plans vary in how much supplemental coverage they offer, so the impact depends on what else is covered.

What is clear, is that the BHP will not take any benefits away.

What else will change?

The Health Plan reforms also aim to ensure everyone is able to buy core coverage at an affordable price. To do this, the Government decided after lengthy consultation, to use a single insurer to sell the core plan. If the administration of the core benefits comes under one insurer, it will make business costs and overheads less expensive.

The core plan will be cheaper in one large pool than split among thousands of pools as it is now. It's the law of big numbers.

Why is the Government doing this?

Our health system is complex. Most people don't fully understand how it works, but everyone can tell if it's working for them or not.

For some people it works really well – they can afford insurance and get all the coverage they need... For others it's a little tougher. Premiums seem only to go up, benefits are not always enough when you really need help.

Also, for the country as a whole, health costs are a big expense. We have the 2nd most expensive health system, but rank 13th in life expectancy.

We can do better.

The Bermuda Health Plan aims to improve access and sustainability, so that everyone can have what they need. People who want the extras will of course be able to purchase that as supplemental insurance. For HIP and FutureCare members, existing benefits will be increased as the core plan increases.

Is this reform rushed?

There is nothing rushed about this process.

The financing options were developed over a one-year period by a bipartisan task force in 2012. In 2018 key stakeholders including health professionals, insurers and employers were asked for their input. Both of these reports are published. The Government selected the most efficient option for our small jurisdiction.

The intent of the Bermuda Health Plan is to *begin a phased* implementation in Fall 2020. It will not be rushed.

The first step may be something as simple as adding prescription drugs to the standard health benefit. The Government already amends the standard health benefit every year.

The reforms mean the amendments will follow a structured phased plan, rather than just adding ad hoc benefits.

The Health Plan will be implemented over 3 to 5 years and in full consultation with the people affected.

The Bermuda Health Plan is the way to get better access and sustainability in Bermuda's health system.

What happens after the public consultation?

The public consultation on the Bermuda Health Plan ends on 8th December 2019.

Working groups will be set up to consider the feedback from the public consultation and they will make recommendations on how we should proceed.

How do I make my views known?

Your views matter so send us your feedback by to healthplan@gov.bm or to the address:

Bermuda Health Plan
Ministry of Health,
P.O. Box HM 308,
Hamilton HM BX

To find factual information go to:

www.gov.bm/healthplan

