



Hong Kong Top-Up Guide 2017-2018



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GUIDE TO TOP-UP INSURANCE PLANS



Hong Kong is Asia's world city, home to more than 7 million people over 1,104 square kilometres. As the region's financial hub, the country's employment market is extremely familiar with offering extra benefits to employees - including health insurance. The practice is not a statutory requirement, but has long been part of an expat's remuneration package.

The cost of medical care in Hong Kong can be extremely expensive, leading the country to be ranked number two in Pacific Prime's global '[Cost of Health Insurance Report 2016](#)'. Although the costs can be up there, the level of care in Hong Kong is quite high and comparable to Western standards. With its government subsidies to locals and Hong Kong ID holders, the public sector can be subject to some long wait times.

Insurance benefits are not what they once were in Hong Kong. The extremely comprehensive employer-provided insurance packages that included dependents are a rare offer these days. Hong Kong has followed the workforce trends of many other countries that are shifting from fully-inclusive packages to plans that are similar in benefits to local insurance policies.

This means that group plans can often only provide a base minimum level of insurance to the employee, and no extended cover to partners and children. For those of you who have higher health insurance requirements, the options are to either seek out a completely new policy, or to purchase a top-up plan to supplement your employer-provided package.

HONG KONG HOSPITALS



Hong Kong boasts one of the best public health systems in Asia, as well as renowned private sector options as well. Public hospitals are government-subsidised for local citizens and those residents holding valid Hong Kong visas. Private hospitals offer premium services at market cost, as well as much shorter wait times, better flexibility in physician choice and care options, and more luxurious in-patient facilities.

It is important to note that with health insurance plans a surgical schedule of fees or a restricted % of coverage/ lower overall limits may apply if you elect to have treatments in a private hospital. When assessing a healthcare plan, it pays to check if your insurer will allow treatments outside public hospitals, and if they have restrictions of specific types of wards (such as 2 or 4 bed wards).



- 1 Hong Kong Adventist Hospital - Tsuen Wan
- 2 Precious Blood Hospital
- 3 Hong Kong Baptist Hospital
- 4 Union Hospital
- 5 St. Teresa's Hospital
- 6 Evangel Hospital
- 7 Matilda International Hospital
- 8 Canossa Hospital
- 9 St. Paul's Hospital
- 10 Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital
- 11 Hong Kong Adventist Hospital - Stubbs Road

COMMON GAPS IN EMPLOYER-PROVIDED INSURANCE PLANS

Being based in Hong Kong, Pacific Prime's experience in providing corporate and group solutions for more than 15 years has shown a number of areas where gaps exist in common employer-provided insurance schemes. These include:

- No portability option
- Low overall limits of coverage for hospital and surgery cases
- Limited or no out-patient benefits
- Limited cancer and kidney dialysis benefits
- Limited doctor and specialist choice due to restricted networks of providers or panels
- Local Hong Kong only coverage
- No maternity benefits
- No dental benefits
- No wellness benefits or vaccination coverage
- High likelihood of requiring GP referrals before consulting with a specialist
- Exclusions on pre-existing conditions
- Absence of offices abroad
- Lengthy claiming procedure

This is not to say that employer-provided schemes are poor quality, they still offer a decent basic level of coverage for members at affordable prices for employers. It is true to say that many basic group plans, however, may offer less comprehensive coverage than what a basic individual plan can include. Pacific Prime Hong Kong advisors have regularly encountered the following scenarios when reviewing corporate insurance plans:

COMMON GAPS IN EMPLOYER-PROVIDED INSURANCE PLANS



Low co-pay coverage

An employee's 'Group Hospital and Surgical' coverage is up to a maximum of HKD 100,000 however there is a 10 or 20% co-insurance or **co-pay** required of the employee for **bills above HKD 20,000**.



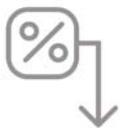
Different surgical schedule coverage

An employee's work insurance policy says the max payable for **surgeries** is subject to a **surgical schedule**. This sets certain reimbursement percentages for certain procedures; such as 100% reimbursement for heart surgery, but only 50% of knee surgery costs.



No portability

An employee aged 55 ceases employment with a company he has been with for 10 years after developing a serious illness like cancer or diabetes. When his employer-provided scheme ends with his employment, he finds he is **declined coverage** by other insurers because of his pre-existing conditions.



Limited serious illness coverage

Diagnosed with cancer, an employee finds that the total overall coverage from the employer-provided scheme amounts to HKD 10,000 for out-patient **chemotherapy** - a figure that will not even cover the actual cost of one cycle of treatments.



Low limits and coverage

A trip to the A&E department is only reimbursed in cases of an **accident** and the limits are usually very low (HKD 80), which does not cover the actual costs involved - leaving the actual treatment costs to be paid by the employee out-of-pocket.



Absence of offices abroad

Companies prefer to secure local plans in Hong Kong. This could mean that should you go abroad and need to claim you will see limited support in English, claims will be required to be submitted in HKD, and you will need paper records - PDFs will not be accepted.

It's important to note that if your plan does not cover certain illnesses or treatments, or it has low limitations which pays only partial bill costs, receiving care in Hong Kong can become very expensive very quickly. Expatriates living and working in Hong Kong are advised to be very clear about what their employer-provided insurance scheme allows for to ensure they don't experience bill shock after a hospital visit.

ACTUAL COSTS OF MEDICAL TREATMENTS AND SURGERIES

In Hong Kong, the level of public information regarding costs and charges at hospitals is not as readily available as in countries such as Singapore. However, there is still enough information available that can give you an idea of what certain procedures may cost you if you need them. Knowing how much you can expect to pay for medical care can help you make the best decision when it comes to assessing your current insurance needs.

The table below provides the cost of some common hospital procedures in Hong Kong Dollars. It includes only private hospital costs only as public hospitals have a set structure that will be explained below it.



Hospital	Procedure	Cost (HKD)
Hong Kong Adventist Hospital	Breast Lumpectomy	22,520
	Colonoscopy	12,590
	Knee arthroscopy	69,417
Matilda International Hospital	Colonoscopy	6,600 (standard room) 9,300 (private room)
	Diagnostic laparoscopy	6,600 (standard room) 9,300 (private room)
	Vasectomy	9,100 (standard room) 12,700 (private room)
Canossa Hospital (Caritas)	Colonoscopy	8,250 (general ward) 17,330(private room)
	Knee arthroscopy	4,600 (third class package) 25,100 (first class package)
	Maternity package (3 day, normal delivery)	18,810 (6-bed room) 25,190 (semi private room) 64,570 (deluxe suite)
Union Hospital	Mastectomy	78,840
	Septoplasty	39,110
	Total knee replacement	96,440

ACTUAL COSTS OF MEDICAL TREATMENTS AND SURGERIES

The public hospital fee structure is very generous for **eligible persons** - that is, those who are holders of a valid Hong Kong ID card, or children who are Hong Kong residents and under 11 years of age. All others are considered non-eligible persons unless otherwise approved by the Chief Executive of the Hospital Authority. Although the costs are low for one-off appointments, multiple night stays or regular appointments can see costs build up quickly.

The fee structure for public hospitals is as follows:

Eligible Persons

Service	Fees
Accident & Emergency	100 per attendance
In-patient (general acute beds)	50 admission fee, 100 per day N1,N2
In-patient (convalescent, rehabilitation, infirmary & psychiatric beds)	68 per day N1,N2
Specialist out-patient (including allied health services)	100 for the 1st attendance, 60 per subsequent attendance, 10 per drug item N5
Day procedure and treatment at Clinical Oncology Clinic and Renal Clinic	80 per attendance
General out-patient	45 per attendance
Dressing & Injection	17 per attendance
Geriatric, Psychiatric & Rehabilitation day hospital	55 per attendance
Community nursing (general)	80 per visit
Community nursing (psychiatric)	Free
Community allied health services	64 per treatment



ACTUAL COSTS OF MEDICAL TREATMENTS AND SURGERIES

Non-Eligible Persons

Service	Fees
Accident & Emergency	990 per attendance
In-patient (general hospitals)	4,680 per day N1
In-patient (psychiatric hospitals)	1,940 per day N1
Intensive care ward/unit	23,000 per day N1
High dependency ward/unit	12,000 per day N1
Nursery	1,110 per day N1
Obstetrics package charge For booked cases, includes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one antenatal checkup; • delivery / delivery care service; and • three days (two nights) hospitalization in a public general ward related to the delivery / delivery care service. 	39,000 N6
Obstetrics package charge For non-booked cases or patients who have not undergone any antenatal checkup provided by HA during the pregnancy concerned, includes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivery / delivery care service; and • three days (two nights) of hospitalization in a public general ward related to the delivery / delivery care service. 	90,000 N6
Specialist out-patient (including allied health services)	1,110 per attendance
Day procedure and treatment at Clinical Oncology Clinic	800 per attendance
Day procedure and treatment at Ophthalmic Clinic	660 per attendance
General out-patient	385 per attendance
Dressing & Injection	100 per attendance
Geriatric day hospital	1,850 per attendance
Rehabilitation day hospital	1,250 per attendance
Psychiatric day hospital	1,150 per attendance
Community nursing (general)	430 per visit
Community nursing (psychiatric)	1,380 per visit
Community allied health services	1,730 per visit

For more information on public hospital charges, please visit the [Hospital Authority](https://www.hospitalauthority.gov.hk) website.

WHAT SOLUTIONS ARE AVAILABLE?

If you've been offered an employer-provided insurance plan but you have found that it won't be as adequate as what you might need, you still have options available to you.

1. PURCHASE A COMPLETELY NEW MEDICAL INSURANCE PLAN

One of the most comprehensive ways to guarantee you have the right coverage is simply to purchase a new, separate medical plan. Because you can tailor it to suit your personal situation, you can ensure:

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- **A continuation of benefits** for as long as you keep the policy, completely separate from the company you work for
- Greater flexibility with **underwriting of pre-existing conditions** with no exclusions or waiting periods
- Include **international coverage** that's portable, so you can receive treatment when abroad for work or holiday
- More **comprehensive benefits** that can include add-ons such as out-patient, maternity, dental, and wellness benefits
- More **freedom to choose your providers**, meaning you can find a doctor or hospital that's convenient to you and just not your insurer
- Get **higher limits of coverage** than employer-provided plans

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The premiums you pay for a new medical insurance plan will depend on your age, and can range from a simple hospital plan to a fully comprehensive policy with extensive benefits. Your health insurance expert Pacific Prime Hong Kong can provide insurance solutions for any requirements and budget.

WHAT SOLUTIONS ARE AVAILABLE?

2. PURCHASE A TOP-UP SOLUTION

Top-up policies take effect if and when the claims and treatments are eligible on **both policies**, and also provided that you don't stand to make a profit from the claims. This setup also restricts submitting a bill twice for actual reimbursements, but you can use a top-up arrangement to offset the **deductible** on your plan:

Insurer A Corporate Plan	Insurer B Private Top-Up Plan
Member claims HKD 1,000 for an accident	Member claims HKD 1,000 for an accident
No deductible	Deductible of HKD 500
Insurer A evaluates and pays claim	Insurer B evaluates claim for HKD 1,000 to offset deductible limit (now down to 0)
Member incurs HKD 15,000 fee for surgery	Member incurs HKD 15,000 fee for surgery
Member opts to claim to insurer B due to limitation on surgery coverage	No deductible remaining, Insurer B evaluates and settles claims for HKD 15,000

The true advantage of a **top-up** plan is that you have the option to include extra benefits with no or very low deductibles - this can include **out-patient, dental, optical** and **wellness** add ons. This can be a great way to supplement a basic level employer-provided insurance plan without the need to pay the higher premiums of a new, full insurance plan. Top-up plans are also **portable**, meaning that you can keep your top-up coverage even if you change jobs.





PACIFIC PRIME

Pacific Prime Hong Kong is your leading insurance broker in Asia and the rest of the world. Their expert staff have been serving more than 120,000 clients over the past 15 years, providing a full range of insurance solutions to both individuals, corporates and families. Their insurance advisors and marketing teams have worked hard to ensure that Pacific Prime is a company that many equate with simplified health insurance.

Alongside their outstanding service standards, choosing Pacific Prime means you'll have access to their insurance partners - the some of the world's most renown brands.



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