



06/17/2012 03:25 PM

To PremiumRateIncreases@dfs.ny.gov

cc

Subject Proposed rate increases for UnitedHealthCare/Oxford

RE: Proposed premium rate adjustment request for the Oxford small group Direct product
United Healthcare Oxford

To Whom It May Concern:

I have just received the annual notice of the proposed increase in my Oxford medical insurance premiums and I am quite frankly panicked by the proposed increase.

My current quarterly premium is \$2,524.68. That is \$10,098.72 per year. A 15.1% increase would bring it up to \$2,905.91 and \$11,623.63 annually.

I am a self-employed person. That would be more than one third of my annual income. I am certain to be left uninsured or forced to switch to a bargain basement insurance.

My health insurance premiums have nearly doubled in the seven years I have been with Oxford. I am scrambling to keep up with my quarterly payments. A 15.1% increase will destroy me. For what? As I hear from my doctors, they have not seen increases in their payments in nearly a decade. What is the purpose of this inhuman increase?

Please somebody, I beg that you understand insurance involves human lives. There are people in this equation.

Do not push forward this increase. You will destroy lives.

Thank you.



06/18/2012 03:34 AM

To PremiumRateIncreases@dfs.ny.gov

cc



Subject proposed health insurance rate increases

I am self employed and have sole practitioner health insurance that costs me/my tiny company a fortune every month: \$626 dollars every month. Now my insurance carrier (United Health Care/Oxford) is proposing a 15.9% increase! That is disgraceful. Every year the rates go up by 100 dollars and I am worried that I won't be able to afford insurance much longer. DFS should NOT approve these increases. Instead of the government trying to ram a socialist health care policy down Americans' throats, the government should be cracking down on insurance companies to make private insurance affordable. Thank you.



06/17/2012 11:40 AM

To premiumrateincreases@dfs.ny.gov
cc

Subject Oxford Health Insurance

This comment is in regard to Oxford Health Insurance Inc and the Oxford small group Direct product.

Oxford's request for a 15.1% premium increase, after a double-digit percentage increase in the prior year, is inexcusable. This is a high-deductible plan where most customers never receive any financial payout from insurance. Can someone please explain to me how costs rose 15% for Oxford or demonstrate that medical costs rose 15% industry-wide to justify this increase? These rates are simply abusive.



06/18/2012 01:20 PM

To premiumrateincreases@dfs.ny.gov
cc

Subject 2013 rate increase

Hello, I received United Health cares notice regarding rate increases for 2013 (15.1% in our case). I was just curious how they come up with their increase? The actual figures of what costs are causing the issues. I know it's not the insurance company making excess profit, so there has to be a major flaw in the system. Any additional information you could send me regarding the increase would be greatly appreciated.

As a small business owner, this greatly impacts me and what I can offer my employees.

Best,



06/18/2012 05:02 PM

To premiumrateincreases@dfs.ny.gov

cc

Subject Oxford Health Insurance, Inc. & Oxford small group Direct product

Hi, I received a notice from Oxford that they will be increasing our premiums for Medical, Pharmacy and Medical/Pharmacy by 15.5% for 2013 renewal. Is this a normal percentage increase? The 15.5% rate seemed high to me and I wanted to check and see if it was.

Thanks,



06/18/2012 07:09 PM

To premiumrateincreases@dfs.ny.gov

cc

Subject Comment against the proposed Oxford Health Insurance Inc and Small Group Direct Product request for 15.1 percent Increase

To the DFS Health Bureau:

I write to ask that you decline in full the most recent request from United Health Care for a 15.1 percent increase for Oxford Health Insurance and its Small Group Direct product. As strong as this statement, I think is reasonable because the purported grounds United Healthcare offers for such an increase are unsubstantiated and there exists considerable evidence that the true reason is not the rise in medical costs but excessive profit--this at a time the company is making enormous profit and at a time of extreme financial hardship for most New Yorkers. I offer you my reasoning and evidence below. (I highlight my reasoning for each paragraph and the evidence that follows.)

The Argument

The increase requested is even more than 15.1 percent increase and based on inflated anticipated expenses. In a recent letter sent to subscribers, United Healthcare and thus Oxford has requested a 15.1 percent increase for 2013, citing "Rising medical costs" as "the main reason for the requested increase." --this on top of a 1.8 percent estimated increase as a result of new state and federally mandated coverage for, respectively, autism and women's prevention coverage. In total, therefore, they are asking for a nearly 17 percent increase, 16.9 percent.

In spite of their claims, the evidence strongly suggests that United Healthcare is doing this out of a desire to increase profit rather than as a result of rising medical costs. Medical costs in 2011 and again in 2012 have flattened out; they are nowhere near this 15.1 or 16.9 percentage, flatly contradicting their "main reason" for such a rate increase. Moreover, United Health Care not only made a substantial profit in 2011, its most recent year, but a profit that was an enormous percentage increase over 2010--an increase that far outstrips the percentage of their rate requests for 2011 and 2012 (and once again at a time of substantial hardship.) Thus the profit of United Healthcare is what is behind this request, not the rising costs of health care.

The Specific Evidence:

1) According to numerous studies, medical costs rose only 4 percent for the year 2011. This estimate has been so widely reported as not to require citation. Moreover, the projected growth for 2012 in the United States is at most 7.5 percent. (Source: PwC's Health Research Institute (HRI)).

2) At the same time, and by its own report, UnitedHealthcare made enormous profit in the most recent year, 2011--19 percent and more.

According to its annual report for 2011, UnitedHealthCare earnings increased 8 percent from 2010 to 2011 on 8 percent increase in revenues. Specifically, the company earned \$8.5 billion dollars on \$102 billion dollars in revenue. This represents a **19 percent return** on equity and **42 percent return** for shareholders.

Thus there exists no solid reason for any increase. They have made enormous profit, enough that more than covers the modest increase in medical costs of 2011 and the anticipated increase of 2012 combined.

Conclusion

I submit to you that the pressure for the company to profit has led them to couch such a request for increase in language that obfuscates. Under the cover of such language, they pressure the DFS at a time when their profit margin is already substantial. I submit that, unusual as it may be, the DFS not reflexively give them any increase given their financial health and the lack of financial health of everyday New Yorkers.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



06/18/2012 09:15 PM

To premiumrateincreases@dfs.ny.gov

cc

Subject Oxford/United Healthcare Premium Rate Increase

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing regarding the 17.2% increase requested by Oxford Health Insurance for the renewal dates 4/1/13 to 6/30/13. My healthcare plan is one that would be affected by this increase. I won't take up a whole lot of your time or mine by writing why this ridiculous, unfounded increase is unwarranted. I'll simply comment that I am paying \$8,000 a year as my employee portion for my

family's health coverage. If this rate increase is approved, it will only hasten the day when we have universal, single payer healthcare -- something which we should have. Ridiculous rate increases like this one are the reason for-profit healthcare is a fundamentally flawed system. We don't need to support an army of medical billers, insurance agents, collection agencies, and other non-essential personnel in keeping people healthy. Do the right thing. Don't rubber-stamp Oxford's unfounded request for a rate increase that is 5 times the rate of core inflation.



06/18/2012 06:07 PM

To <PremiumRateIncreases@dfs.ny.gov>

cc

Subject Comment regarding Oxford small group Direct product rate increase

Dear Sir/Madam:

I urge you to carefully review the rate request submitted by United Healthcare/Oxford for their small group Direct product premium rate increase. I am a self-employed small business in [REDACTED]. In the past 5 years, I have seen my annual health insurance rates increase by 31% (from \$5,462 in 2008 to \$7,158 in 2011). I hold an individual policy and, at the current premium rates, am not able to afford a plan that includes prescription coverage. The high cost and ongoing annual increases in premiums prevent me from investing in my business — particularly from expanding my business and employing other individuals. My current annual premiums of \$7,158 represent almost 7% of my annual gross income. I also pay a co-pay of \$50 to see my primary care physician and a co-pay of \$75 should I need the care of a specialist.

UnitedHealth Group continues to operate with healthy net earnings, so I do not understand why they have petitioned to increase my medical premium by 15.1%. That would increase my annual premium to \$8,203 — an increase of \$1,045 — which means my medical premium would equal close to 8% of my gross income. This means that I would have to spend one full month working just to pay my medical premiums.

While I understand that health costs are rising, I do not believe that a rate increase of 15.1% is justified. I am extremely uncertain that I will be able to increase my income to cover such a cost. I am also concerned that the cost of health insurance will soon be out of reach for me.

I implore you to deny this rate increase.



06/18/2012 05:55 PM

To PremiumRateIncreases@dfs.ny.gov

cc

Subject Oxford Health - small group Direct

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to protest the proposed rate increase by Oxford Health for the year starting 7/1/2013. The 15.9% increase proposed for both the Medical and Pharmacy Premium is not needed to cover increased costs but is sought simply to drive a gain in annual profits and provide more cash for large dividend increases and stock buybacks. The annual increase in the medical loss ratio simply does not support such a massive increase in the premium. If we

extrapolate premium increases at 15.9% the implication is that the premium sought will double every four years and quadruple every eight years.

As a customer, I am deeply offended by the relentless gouging of the patient/consumer on one hand and the appalling treatment of medical providers on the other. Our doctors complain about the outrageous and intolerable attempts to deny and delay payment for covered services by Oxford. In addition we have been harassed by "robo-calls" from Oxford that seek to establish the possibility of another insurance plan or other party that should be paying the bill instead of Oxford. One health insurance plan is expensive enough for us-- do they really think that we can afford another plan from one of their competitors?

I am also outraged by the game of applying for an increase far, far in excess of what Oxford really expects to be approved so that the DFS (and by extension, our Governor) can look great by "winning" a large reduction from the full increase being sought, and Oxford will be able to tell its shareholders next year about its phenomenal success in the marketplace. Insurance Companies that are found to be applying for a rate increase substantially in excess of their cost driven needs should be penalized for acting in bad faith and have their application denied with no possibility of reapplying for one year. I know that this is asking too much of a corrupt system, but I believe that if consumers ever saw this type of action being taken rather than the pro-forma reductions, they would finally feel as though there was a real watchdog on duty rather than a lapdog.

Sincerely,



06/18/2012 05:10 PM

To <premiumrateincreases@dfs.ny.gov>

cc

Subject Oxford small group direct product

Once again I am appalled at the fact that Oxford, like many other healthcare providers, is asking for absurd rate increases. Healthcare providers have continuously profited showing no reasons for any increase in rates. Keep raising the health insurance premiums along with our taxes and America will be gone. I have not raised my prices for services or products in 15 years. Enough is enough!!!



06/19/2012 11:27 AM

To premiumrateincreases@dfs.ny.gov

cc

Subject Health ins increase notification

Health Bureau,

Oxford has sent out a notice stating that they have applied for a huge rate increase, yet again. Our insurance premiums just increased 2 months ago and go up every year. I understand the problems and support the Health care legislation which is being phased in. I do believe that the "individual mandate" should be allowed to stand.

I realize that those of us who do not utilize much of the medical care dollars have to subsidize those who do. However, another 15.5% increase is ridiculous and very unfair and unaffordable for someone such as myself. Please, limit the increase to 5% at the maximum!



06/19/2012 11:31 AM

To "premiumrateincreases@dfs.ny.gov"
<premiumrateincreases@dfs.ny.gov>

cc

Subject excessive rate increase sought

Dear Sir/Madam:

My insurance company, Oxford Health Insurance Inc., sent me a notice on June 15 stating that it has requested a premium rate increase of 16.9% for its small group EPO product. I am asking the Department of Financial Services to rein in this unconscionable rate hike.

I note that the long-term increase in Medicare spending has averaged 7%/year per covered patient over the past 27 years, while our small-business health insurance premiums have been increasing at more than 10% each year for many years even as insurance companies have been raising copayments and deductibles. Considering that Medicare serves an older population than the typical small business employee, I cannot see any reason why private insurance should be rising at more than twice the rate of Medicare expenditures.

In this economic climate, our sales volume is stagnant while the costs of regulatory compliance have increased. If my employees are to maintain their purchasing power, the only way to meet the added expense of this outrageous fee hike will be to lay people off. (We employ 14 workers in addition to the owners.)

I hope that the DFS will consider the economic impact of insurance premiums that will double every four years at the rate requested. I and other small business owners look to the DFS for your protection. Thank you.



06/19/2012 06:02 PM

To PremiumRateIncreases@dfs.ny.gov

cc

Subject Opposition to Oxford Health Insurance's Request for a 15% Rate Increase

Dear Sir/Madam:

I write to register my vehement opposition to Oxford Health Insurance's request for a 15.5% rate increase.

Rate increases in any business, but especially regarding healthcare, should have some rational connection to supply, demand, costs, profits and inflation. Judged by these standards, there is absolutely no fair basis for such a large increase in a highly regulated and essential product as health insurance.

The current rate of inflation is about 1.7% and that fact alone, how low it is, argues against any increase beyond that rate.

Furthermore, Oxford is owned by United Healthcare, a 60 billion dollar company with a P/E ratio of about 12 and an EBITDA of 9.33 billion dollars. This is a hugely rich and profitable company that in no way "needs" to increase its profit margin. A 15.5% increase would simply go to its bottom line. If they were selling luxury cars customers could simply walk away but health insurance is a necessity and the public should not be gouged.

I defy Oxford to put forward any remotely reasonable reason for this increase request.



06/20/2012 08:44 AM

To premiumrateincreases@dfs.ny.gov

cc

Subject Oxford proposed rate increases

To : Health Bureau- Premium Rate Adjustments
NY State Department of Financial Services
25 Beaver Street
NY NY 10004

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am a policyholder through my small business of [REDACTED]

The notice of proposed increase just arrived in the mail today. It is calling for an increase of 15.9% in the rate that is already an elevated \$1664 per month.

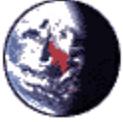
There are several ways that the insurance company can attempt to justify this proposed rate increase. However with its CEO drawing \$31 million in compensation without contributing \$25 million of this amount to reducing premiums, it is hard to be supportive of this action. Why are we the consumer required to support excess revenue over expense for the insurance company without the insurance company being required to tow the line in administrative expense

My premium for a family of 4 is now going to be \$1864 per month.....
Very close if not at a level that self funding will be cheaper than having to pay Oxford.



06/19/2012 04:44 PM

To PremiumRateIncreases@dfs.ny.gov



cc

Subject United Healthcare/Oxford: Premium Rate Adjustment Filing
for Renewal 4/1/2013 - 6/30/2013

Dear Sirs:

I received A Notice from United Healthcare/Oxford of a Premium Rate Adjustment Filing for Renewal 4/1/2013 - 6/30/2013. The Estimated Increases over 2012 Total Premium (Medical and Pharmacy) is 15.5%.

I have an Oxford Liberty Plan Direct for Sole Proprietorships. I and my domestic partner pay our own health insurance. This increase would be a financial hardship.

Considering the profits that Oxford is making every year, it is unjustified to request such an increase in one year, following the overly generous increase it was granted last year. (Last year, Oxford requested a 20% increase.)

Clearly, United Health is making record profits. UnitedHealth became the first major health insurer to pay a dividend when it announced a 12.5 cent payout in early 2010. UnitedHealth raised its dividend payout in 2011 by 30 percent to 16 cents per share on an annual basis. This significant increase meant that the stock yielded 1.34 percent. United Health was a company that paid an annual dividend of just three cents per share in 2010. Then it chose to greatly increase its dividends in 2011. Certainly, its ever increasing premiums must have helped it make these premium payment decisions. Why should it be granted another huge increase this year. It is not only increased costs that is making this insurer request such large premium increases. It is its desire to pay out larger dividends.

(The foregoing figures can be verified at

[REDACTED]

Such increases should not be rubber stamped every time the health insurance companies request them, citing "increased costs." United Healthcare/Oxford controls costs by setting the fees it pays by "in network" providers, and by only paying a portion of costs billed by "out of network" providers. The insured person pays larger and larger portions of medical costs. Therefore, we should not be asked to pay higher and higher premiums every year.

Please do not agree to yet another exaggerated increased premium demand.

Thank you.