

Covid-19 insurance: IRDAI may extend Corona Kavach and Corona Rakshak policies

Updated : 11 September, 2020, 04:55 PM IST

The standardised Covid health insurance policies **Corona Kavach** and **Corona Rakshak** will be made mainstream and their timelines extended, according to **TL Alamelu**, member of the **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)**. The proposed changes are being considered as the virus continues to spread and its impact on the country is likely to be prolonged. “We were very optimistic” Alamelu said, about the decision to cap the validity of the policies till March 2021. She was speaking during an Associated Chambers of Commerce of India web conference on Friday.

“We are thinking of ways and means, sooner than later we will issue instructions on how it can be mainstreamed,” Alamelu said. Insurers were mandated to provide the two Covid-special health policies, introduced by the Insurance regulator in July, alongside their own policies. The popularity of the two standardised policies has been growing substantially, according to Alamelu. After an initial spurt in the number of policies sold, Corona Kavach still clocked a 15% weekly growth, she said, adding that most policyholders have chosen the 9.5 month coverage plan.

During an online conference last month, Subhash Khuntia, chairman of IRDAI said about 1.5 million lives were insured under the two policies within a month of the launch.

Noting the growth of the health insurance sector that the pandemic prompted, Alamelu said the sector’s share of the Insurance market grew from 27% to 30% in a very short time between March and July.

The regulator was also considering a **digital health platform** for settlement of claims that would involve all stakeholders in the health insurance ecosystem.

“This could be stitched up with the **National Digital Health Mission** so that we have a broad platform of everything Going digital,” Alamelu added.

Insurers would also have to alter their strategy to align with the digital shift brought on by the pandemic, she said, asking Insurers to encourage policyholders to opt for e-policies.

“Insurers should encourage policy holders to go in for e-health covers and share their health records on this platform. It will not only help them but will definitely help the health insurance industry with better pricing,” Alamelu said, adding that this would improve pricing of policies.