

What are TPAs?

Who are they?

- Third party administrators or TPAs are part of the managed care system
- First introduced to help their clients (insurers and companies) manage/lower costs

Services they provide?

- Offer clients a panel of doctors and specialists to choose from
- Process medical claims, man hotline calls, monitor discrepancies in medical bills

Doctors' roles?

- TPAs enter into agreements with individual GPs and specialists
- Doctors pay admin fees to join panel in return for access to patient pool

Why the uproar?

- For each of these patients, doctors pay TPAs 8-25% of total bill
- Fees levied have eaten into profit margins, some say they don't break even

Other complications?

- TPAs limit doctors' choice of medication
- Doctors have to adhere to fixed fee schedules
- Doctors can only refer to those in the panel
- Lack of transparency on transactions
- TPAs are not regulated

SMA's position?

- TPAs should re-examine fee calculations, patients to be given a breakdown of the charges incurred
- Doctors should refrain from joining schemes if they believe quality of care will eventually be compromised