

Off the agenda: AMII PMI meeting vetoes transparency discussions

By Liz McMahon

The thorny subject of claims data sharing was banned from discussion at a meeting of private medical insurers held by the Association of Medical Insurance Intermediaries (AMII).

The invitation received by PMI insurers stated that certain providers would not attend the meeting if claims data transparency was mentioned.

Head of healthcare at Groupama, Alistair Sclare, said: "Everybody knew that claims transparency was at the top of the list of what AMII and British Insurance Brokers' Association (Biba) members wanted us to talk about and I struggle with the principle of attending a meeting that has a blackout on the topic, which the meeting was actually designed to discuss."

However, Mike Izzard, chairman of AMII, said: "The meeting went better than I had dared hope; it developed



Alistair Sclare: Slams topic blackout

a footprint for moving the industry forward. There were some areas of commonality and a desire to work together on the issues that there can be some agreement on. We didn't comment on claims sharing because that's off the agenda at the moment. We are going to do the easy bit and in a couple of years' time, who knows what will come forward."

However, while transparency was left off the agenda, other issues raised included the development of an agreed

market service standard for the release of medical or renewal schedules.

On the debate's success, Mr Sclare said: "There was an effort to actually make some progress on this issue but in reality it is still being stifled by the statement that unless all insurers agree to this, many simply won't get involved."

Head of technical support at Biba, Peter Staddon, who had questioned the worth of the panel, now admitted he thought it had "legs".

On the subject of claims transparency, he added: "When the situation changes, which it will, Alistair Sclare can turn around and say – look, I was an innovator."

Mr Sclare is undecided over whether he will attend the next PMI panel meeting, which will be held before the end of the first quarter in 2010, saying: "There were a number of insurers in the room that seemed to think if we simply fail to discuss transparency, the problem would go away."