

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
INSURANCE DEPARTMENT

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In The Matter Of :
EQUITABLE LIFE & CASUALTY: **Docket No. LH 14-40**
INSURANCE COMPANY :
Medicare Supplement Insurance :
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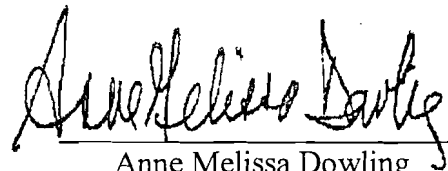
ORDER

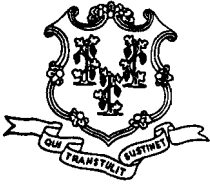
I, Anne Melissa Dowling, Deputy Commissioner of the State of Connecticut, having read the record, do hereby adopt the findings and recommendations of Danny K. Albert, Hearing Officer in the above matter and issue the following order, to wit:

The Medicare supplement rate increase request submitted by Equitable Life and Casualty Insurance Company for its individual standardized Medicare supplement policy forms 2050-A CT (Plan A) and 2050-N-CT (Plan N) is disapproved as submitted. The company's projected lifetime loss ratios for these forms, with the requested rate increase is considerably below the company's expected lifetime loss ratio of 75%.

The company's rate increase request for its individual standardized Medicare supplement policy form 2050-F CT. (Plan F) is approved as submitted. The proposed rate increase for this policy form is reasonable in light of the incurred claim costs and the anticipated loss ratio the company can expect to realize on this form.

Dated at Hartford, Connecticut, this 19th day of May, 2014


Anne Melissa Dowling
Deputy Commissioner



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PROPOSED FINAL DECISION

1. INTRODUCTION

The Insurance Commissioner of the State of Connecticut is empowered to review rates charged for individual and group Medicare supplement policies sold to any resident of this State who is eligible for Medicare. The source for this regulatory authority is contained in Chapter 700c and Section 38a-495a of the Connecticut General Statutes.

After due notice a hearing was held at the Insurance Department in Hartford on May 7, 2014 to consider whether or not the rate increase requested by Equitable Life & Casualty Insurance Company on its individual standardized Medicare supplement business should be approved.

No one from the general public attended the hearing.

No company representatives participated in the hearing.

The hearing was conducted in accordance with the requirements of Section 38a-474, Connecticut General Statutes, the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, Chapter 54 of the Connecticut General Statutes, and the Insurance Department Rules of Practice, Section 38a-8-1 et seq. of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

A Medicare supplement (or Medigap) policy is a private health insurance policy sold on an individual or group basis which provides benefits that are additional to the benefits provided by Medicare. For many years Medicare supplement policies have been highly regulated under both state and federal law to protect the interests of persons eligible for Medicare who depend on these policies to provide additional coverage for the costs of health care.

Effective December 1, 2005, Connecticut amended its program of standardized Medicare supplement policies in accordance with Section 38a-495a of the Connecticut General Statutes, and Sections 38a-495a-1 through 38a-495a-21 of the Regulations of Connecticut Agencies. This program, which conforms to federal requirements, provides that all insurers offering Medicare supplement policies for sale in the state must offer the basic "core" package of benefits known as Plan A. Insurers may also offer any one or more of eleven other plans (Plans B through N).

Effective January 1, 2006, in accordance with Section 38a-495c of the Connecticut General Statutes (as amended by Public Act 05-20) premiums for all Medicare supplement policies in the state must use community rating. Rates for Plans A through N must be computed without regard to age, gender, previous claims history or the medical condition of any person covered by a Medicare supplement policy or certificate.

The statute provides that coverage under Plan A through N may not be denied on the basis of age, gender, previous claims history or the medical condition of any covered person. Insurers may exclude benefits for losses incurred within six months from the effective date of coverage based on a pre-existing condition.

Effective October 1, 1998, carriers that offer Plan B or Plan C must make these plans as well as Plan A, available to all persons eligible for Medicare by reason of disability.

Insurers must also make the necessary arrangements to receive notice of all claims paid by Medicare for their insureds so that supplemental benefits can be computed and paid without requiring insureds to file claim forms for such benefits. This process of direct notice and automatic claims payment is commonly referred to as “piggybacking” or “crossover”.

Sections 38a-495 and 38a-522 of the Connecticut General Statutes, and Section 38a-495a-10 of the Regulations of Connecticut Agencies, state that individual and group Medicare supplement policies must have anticipated loss ratios of 65% and 75%, respectively. Under Sections 38a-495-7 and 38a-495a-10 of the Regulations of Connecticut Agencies, filings for rate increases must demonstrate that actual and expected losses in relation to premiums meet these standards, and anticipated loss ratios for the entire future period for which the requested premiums are calculated to provide coverage must be expected to equal or exceed the appropriate loss ratio standard.

Section 38a-473 of the Connecticut General Statutes provides that no insurer may incorporate in its rates for Medicare supplement policies factors for expenses that exceed 150% of the average expense ratio for that insurer’s entire written premium for all lines of health insurance for the previous calendar year.

II. **FINDING OF FACT**

After reviewing the exhibits entered into the record of this proceeding, and utilizing the experience, technical competence and specialized knowledge of the Insurance Department, the undersigned makes the following findings of fact:

1. Equitable Life & Casualty Insurance Company has requested a 7% rate increase for its individual standardized Medicare supplement policy form 2050 for Plans A, F and N.

2. There are four policies in-force in Connecticut and 20,105 nationwide as of 9/30/13.
3. The last rate increase approved was 7%, in January of 2013.
4. Equitable Life certified that their expense factor is in compliance with section 38a-473, C.G.S.
5. Equitable Life has conformed to subsection (e) of section 38a-495c, C.G.S. regarding the automatic claim processing.
6. According to Equitable Life the proposed rates are designed to satisfy a loss ratio of 75%.
7. Nationwide loss ratio experience provided for 2012, 2013 (through 9/30/13) and inception-to-date:

<u>Plan</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>Inception</u>
A	126.1%	56.5%	77.6%
F	78.3%	81.8%	79.9%
N	67.3%	63.2%	63.1%

8. The projected lifetime loss ratios with and without the requested rate increase, on a nationwide basis, are as follows:

<u>Plan</u>	<u>With</u>	<u>Without</u>
A	61.4%	64.6%
F	82.6%	86.7%
N	64.1%	67.3%

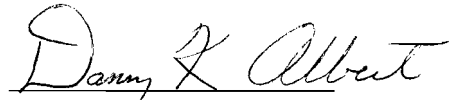
9. Connecticut experience is not credible.
10. Equitable Life's 2014 Medicare supplement rate filing is in compliance with the requirements of regulation 38a-474 as it applies to the contents of the rate submission, as well as the actuarial memorandum.

III. RECOMMENDATION

The undersigned recommends that the 7.0% rate increase for Plans A and N be disapproved as submitted. As stated in the actuarial memorandum, Equitable Life is pricing to an expected loss ratio of 75%, both lifetime projected loss ratios are well below 75%, with the rate increase requested.

Also recommend that the 7.0% increase for Plan F be approved as submitted.

Dated at Hartford, Connecticut, this 19th day of May, 2014

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Danny K. Albert". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Danny K. Albert
Hearing Officer