

The ITP Support Association Platelet Reprint Series



No. 8 – Insurance Issues

Platelet article reprinted from: **March 2005**

Title: **Two out of Three**

Author: **Martyn Edwards FPC, CeMap**

Some ITP sufferers have difficulty securing life insurance, or even a mortgage. Martyn Edwards FPC. CeMap. is an independent financial advisor who writes of his professional efforts on behalf of a client with ITP.

You would think that getting married, buying a house and settling down would be the things that dreams are made of, wouldn't you? Well, two out of the three are OK, but I spent a frustrating hour or two speaking to various Life Insurance companies attempting to obtain mortgage protection for a client who suffers with ITP.

Firstly there was the frequently asked question, "What's ITP ?" (to be honest, that was my first question as well). Then there was, "What is the full name of the disease"; then, "How are you spelling that" (I didn't spell it in the first place, however if I had I would have called it something with a name easier to spell). Then all too frequently I heard, "Oh, having looked in 'The Book' we are unable to provide cover for that illness".

So I decided to attack the problem from a different angle and found the ITP Support Association website and e-mailed Shirley to ask if she knew of any insurance companies who were sympathetic to sufferers. She mailed back and said no. She asked that if I found any would I let her know...so here I am.

My experiences in this field have taught me there are those companies who work from the book, i.e., the illness and condition, is the be-all-and-end-all, and so work from 'The Book'. Then there are the more enlightened companies who say, "How does this illness or disease affect the individual sufferer"? They naturally request a full medical disclosure from the individual, will probably request permission to contact the client's doctor and may even request a medical examination takes place (however, not in the case of my client).

They then prepare a quotation for the individual, which could lead to specific exclusions for an illness or disease (once again not for my client) and may refuse to offer protection at all (yes, you've guessed it – not for my client), or they may charge more for the protection than the standard rate (OK, this did apply to my client). However the increase in monthly premium was only £6.00, which was for a policy which included Life and Critical Illness Protection.

So, as we started out at the beginning, two out of three isn't bad and the third need not be too bad after all.

Platelet article reprinted from: **June 2005**

Title: **Insurance Issues**

Author: **Keith Lewis (Platelet Editor)**

THE ITP SUPPORT Association has always tried to provide accurate and comprehensive information on the various difficulties that living with ITP seems to expose. One such problem concerns insurance – holiday, life or health – and all can seem to present obstacles for some patients. However, since the insurance industry is founded upon commercial interests the ITP Support Association, as a charity, has to be careful that its insurance advice is based on impartial and non-profit making considerations (which also explains why The Platelet does not carry private advertisements, no matter how attractive advertising rates may seem to be).

One particular area of concern for ITP sufferers arises from the fact that it is not a popularly known medical condition, and insurance underwriters have to consult their little book to find out what it is. Since this is likely to give only a general outline of the condition, probably taking a worst case view, they may be quite unable to properly evaluate the risk on an individual basis, trusting instead to a 'blanket' response – a one size fits all approach. In many cases this will grossly overestimate the true risk of underwriting for such patients. Some underwriters have even refused insurance for ITP sufferers on the grounds of this unwarranted ignorance.

Recently, however, The ITP Association has been able to benefit from the help of an Independent Financial Advisor willing to give insurance help to Platelet readers in difficulties. Martyn Edwards first became known to us some months ago while acting on behalf of a client with ITP. Subsequently he very kindly made himself available for insurance advice at the 10th ITP Anniversary Celebrations when he hosted one of the morning's discussion groups.

For those looking for holiday insurance, the Association's Holiday Guide lists companies who should be able to provide cover for ITP patients. Also, Martyn has found one highly respected company who will consider providing Life Assurance cover, evaluating each application on its own merits, rather than applying the 'blanket' response.

Martyn has stated that he is willing to help ITP patients who contact him directly, should they wish. His expertise includes Life Assurance, critical illness cover, mortgages, pensions, investments and private medical insurance. He told us that it is important for ITP sufferers to be specific, to have all details (including dates) to hand when applying for insurance/assurance or the covering company may not honour any arising claim. His first encounter with an ITP client convinced him that by searching hard enough it is usually possible to find something for most people, albeit with exclusions sometimes (e.g. the person insured may be covered for all claims excepting ITP). Martyn also has links with a specialist underwriter for problematic insurance/assurance cover and says that as far as financial enquiries are concerned, if he can't deal with it personally he'll 'know a man who can'!

We must make it clear that Martyn is a professional Independent Financial Advisor and any insurance cover he makes on a patient's behalf will earn him commission from the insurance company. Many will feel this to be a just reward for expert advice, a view which we support.

Those in need of his help may contact:

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Editors Note: Since this article was produced the insurance market has changed with many new companies now offering various products. Everyone should shop around for the best deal they can obtain.