

MEDIA RELEASE

With over 30 health insurers to choose from, consumers should shop around

Health Minister Sussan Ley MP today announced an average premium increase of 6.18% across the private health insurance industry, reflecting the growing costs of hospital and medical services.

hirmaa, the peak body for member-owned and community based insurers stressed the importance of premium rises to sustainability in the health system.

“Health costs continue to rise as medical technologies become more advanced and as utilisation by the growing and ageing population inevitably increases.” Said hirmaa CEO Mr Matthew Koce.

“Indeed, benefits paid to health insurance customers grew by over \$1 billion or 7.4% to around \$17.3 billion in the 12 months to December 2014.”

“Premium rises are necessary to ensure health funds remain solvent and can continue to deliver access to high quality medical care. Premium rises are also calculated under intense actuarial and government scrutiny” said Mr Koce.

“We are fortunate in Australia competition and choice is alive and well with over 30 health insurers competing in the market place.”

Mr Koce urged Australians to shop around and to consider taking out health insurance with a member-owned or community based insurer that directs premiums solely toward the interests of its customers and not shareholders.

“Unlike the listed for profits such as Medibank Private and NIB, customers of member-owned and community-based insurers can be assured that premiums are only reinvested back into serving their interests, not shareholders.”

hirmaa is the peak industry body for seventeen private health insurers which are member-owned and not-for-profit. In all, the hirmaa funds provide private health insurance for over one million Australians.

A complete list of hirmaa funds is available at http://hirmaa.com.au/member_funds.

Premium rises come into effect on the 1st of April 2015.

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Further enquiries:

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