

MEDIA RELEASE

hirmaa health insurers are the leaders when it comes to customer satisfaction

The customer centric nature of not-for-profit, member owned and community based health insurers has once again been highlighted in the Private Health Insurance Ombudsman (Ombudsman) 2015-16 Annual Report.

This year's report found a 0.9% decrease in the number of disputes for hirmaa member funds, compared to a significant 17.7% increase for the industry as a whole. Despite representing 9.6% of the industry, hirmaa insurers only recorded 4.6% of complaints.

"The Ombudsman's report demonstrates the commitment the 20 not-for-profit hirmaa health insurers have shown to remain the industry leaders when it comes to customer satisfaction," hirmaa CEO, Matthew Koce said.

"hirmaa insurers are not-for-profit, member owned and community based, this means that the satisfaction of policy holders is and will always be their number one concern."

"hirmaa insurers are very different to the big for profit health insurers because they only exist to serve policyholders, not profit driven shareholders and foreign investors." Mr Koce said.

The findings of the Ombudsman are consistent with independent research conducted by Discovery Research. The Discovery Research findings showed an average overall customer satisfaction score of 97 per cent across participating not-for-profit hirmaa insurers.

The report by the Ombudsman demonstrates that not-for-profit private health insurers are open and transparent in their operations but unfortunately the same cannot be said of health service providers.

"The key to further improving the customer experience is for government to help drive reforms that empower consumers to make genuinely informed choices about their healthcare."

"We would like to see much greater consumer transparency around the pricing and performance of medical specialists, hospitals and medical devices. The lack of publically available and easy to digest information for consumers on which hospital has the lowest infection rates or which surgeon has the lowest re-admission rates is concerning and must be addressed by Government as a priority."

Consumers should have an as of right access to timely and accurate information on something as important as their choice of surgeon and hospital and whilst great advancements are being made overseas, unfortunately the same cannot be said in Australia.

hirmaa is the peak industry body for 20 private health insurers which are not- for-profit, member-owned and community based. In all, the hirmaa funds provide private health insurance for over one million Australians.

A copy of the 2015-16 Private Health Insurance Ombudsman (PHIO) Annual Report can be found [here](#).

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