

MEDIA RELEASE

Not-for-Profit and Member Owned health funds call for all sides of politics to commit to restoring the full 30% private health insurance rebate

The peak body for not-for-profit, member owned and community based health insurers has called for all sides of politics to commit to restoring the full 30% private health insurance rebate.

“Until the full rebate is restored, it is imperative that no further changes occur that would add to complexity, reduce affordability or place added pressure on public hospital waiting lists.” Matthew Koce, CEO of hirmaa said.

“The private health insurance rebate is means tested. It only goes to Australians that need it most. Any proposals to axe the Australian Government Rebate would be radical and dangerous as it would instantly result in a cruel 40% increase in private health insurance premiums, a devastating and costly blow for low income families and seniors.”

“Nothing is more important than good health and millions of Australians simply would not be able to afford private health care if it were not for the Government Rebate. Without government assistance many Australians would be denied the peace of mind that comes from knowing that they will receive fast high quality treatment when they and their loved ones need it.”

“Driving up premiums by a massive 40% would force millions out of private health insurance and onto overstretched public hospital waiting lists. Presently over 40% of all procedures take place in private hospitals, so even a small decrease in private health insurance participation could have a devastating impact on the public health system, where waiting lists already run into the years.”

“While the Rebate costs taxpayers around \$6.5 billion dollars a year, it leverages a staggering \$19 billion dollars in benefits that would otherwise have to be paid by government. Therefore the ongoing sustainability of the health system is highly dependent on a viable private health sector.”

People’s health is too important to be used as a political football. As the peak body for not-for-profit, member owned and community based health insurers, we are calling for bipartisanship, with all sides of politics committing to the full restoration of the Australian Government Rebate as a priority in the lead-up to the 2017 Budget,” said Mr Koce.

hirmaa is the national peak body for 21 not-for-profit, member owned and community based health insurers. hirmaa funds only exist to serve policyholders, not shareholders and cover over 1 million lives.

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Further enquiries:

Matthew Koce
0407 852 010