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Reforms make health insurance easier to navigate for consumers

Matthew Koce, CEO of Members Health has welcomed the Minister Hunt's private health insurance reform package and in particular today's announcement of Gold/Silver/Bronze and Basic product tiers.

"The new product tiers will make private health insurance much less complex and easier to navigate for consumers."

"Minister Hunt is to be commended for providing consumers with greater certainty around the services covered by each type of health insurance product. Choosing the right level of private health insurance cover will be simpler and easier thanks to these reforms. Consumer will find it much more straightforward to shop around and compare different hospital treatment products, to find one that best meets their individual circumstances and needs."

"The new product classification tiers were designed to be cost neutral and will not impact the price of health insurance, including pregnancy cover."

"The changes will especially benefit women with breast cancer, as all medically necessary breast surgery will be included in all Bronze tier hospital treatment products and above." Mr Koce said.

"This change is will help consumers compare different hospital treatment products more easily and shop around for a better deal without harming affordability or choice."

"Nothing is more important than good health and the Alliance of Members Health funds share Minister Hunt's commitment to make health insurance as accessible and affordable as possible."

"The Member Health funds are not-for-profit, member owned and community based. They only exist to serve consumers and we welcome Minister Hunt's efforts to help enhance the value and accessibility of private health insurance coverage for all Australians."

"The legislation to introduce the new product categories are part of a comprehensive package of reforms that includes over \$300 million in annual savings from cuts to overpriced medical devices such as pacemakers and artificial knees and hips. Some medical devices were priced at over 200% more in Australian private hospitals than in public hospitals or comparable overseas markets."

"We are also pleased that efforts are also now well underway to provide consumers with easy to access information on medical practitioner performance and pricing to address painful out of pocket costs."

"Young people are also big winners out the reform package. For the first time, young people will be eligible to receive a discount from their health insurer of up to 10%."

"Many younger Australians need health insurance but can't afford it. Younger Australians tend to earn less and are confronted with mounting cost of living pressures – such as housing affordability and university debts. Allowing health insurers the option to offer a discount to younger Australians is a good thing. It will help younger Australians to take personal responsibility for their healthcare and avoid languishing on long and unpleasant public hospital waiting lists that can run into the years."

Putting members' health before profit

“People requiring Mental Health support are also key beneficiaries of the Minister’s reform package. Waiting periods for mental health policy upgrades have been eliminated on a one off basis. This means that anyone with private health insurance will be guaranteed access to the highest quality mental health services when they need it.”

“Australians living in rural and regional areas will now be able to get health insurance cover for travel and accommodation expense, when medical services are not available in their local community.”

“People living in the country can find it very difficult getting access to the major hospitals. Thanks to Minister Hunt, private patients in rural and regional areas will now be able to access the best available medical treatments in no matter where they live.”

“The private health system provides around half the Australian population with outstanding access to fast and efficient high quality care.”

“Private health is critical to the Australian health system. Last year it generated \$20 Billion dollars in health care services that would otherwise have to be paid for by taxpayers, putting already overstretched public hospital waiting lists under extraordinary pressure.”

“The fact that the Australian Government continues to fully support private health and the interests of private health consumers highlights the value of the industry and the clear benefits it offers.”

“We again congratulate the Minister for Health, Greg Hunt MP, for acting in the interests of private health consumers.

Members Health is the peak industry body for 23 health insurers which are not-for-profit, member-owned and community based. In all, the Members Health funds provide private health insurance to over 1.7 million Australians.

Further enquires:

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