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Statement from Members Health CEO

Members Health, the peak body representing 24 not-for-profit and member-owned health insurers, wishes to express disappointment at the Federal Health Minister's decision to abandon the removal of general-use items from the Prescribed List of Medical Devices and Human Tissue (PL) from 1 July 2024.

Members Health recognises the importance of a well-functioning regulatory system for medical devices and has long advocated in the public interest for greater transparency, objectivity and accountability.

"It is disappointing that the Federal Government has walked away from this reform at the 11th hour, after many years of consultation and a series of Government reports highlighting the need for change." Members Health CEO, Matthew Koce said.

"The current regulatory system allows multinational companies to charge Australians exorbitant prices for common medical supplies, even when they sell the same products elsewhere for less. It also incentivises the use of medical products at higher volumes through the use of secretive rebates. These higher costs are inevitably passed on to consumers through premium price hikes, which no one wants and Australians can ill afford during a cost-of-living crisis." Mr Koce explained.

"Members Health remain committed to working collaboratively with the Government to achieve a more efficient, transparent, and objective approach to prostheses regulation that prioritises affordability and fosters a competitive market for the benefit of all Australians."

Members Health is calling on the Federal Government to outline what alternative pathways it will take to achieve a more competitive market for medical devices to ensure Australians receive high-quality prostheses at fair prices.

"We can't just let big multinational companies overcharge Australians for an identical medical device that they sell at lower prices elsewhere. That is unfair and does not have the interest of consumers at heart" Mr Koce said.

Members Health looks forward to continuing to work with the Minister and Federal Government on pursuing good policy outcomes that prioritise consumers and their wellbeing above all else.

Members Health is the peak industry body for an alliance of 24 health funds that are not-for-profit or part of a member-owned group, regional or community based. They all share the common ethic of putting their members' health before profit. Our funds represent the interests of more than 5.3 million Australians.



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Putting members' health before profit

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