

MEDIA RELEASE:

13.01.2025

**STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL 6AM
AEDST, MONDAY 13 JANUARY 2025.**

**END BAN ON HEALTH INSURANCE FUNDS HELPING COVER RISING
GP OUT-OF-POCKET FEES!**

Members Health, the umbrella body for not-for-profit health funds, is calling for an immediate end to the Government ban on health insurers helping cover soaring GP out of pocket costs.

“It makes no sense that health insurance funds can help cover the cost of dental, optical and physio appointments but not something as important as a trip to the GP.” Matthew Koce, CEO of Members Health said.

“The ban on health funds helping cover GP out-of-pocket costs is long past its used by date and axing it is a no-brainer” Mr Koce said.

“It will help make a trip to the GP more accessible for more Australians, deliver better health outcomes and combat rising cost of living pressures.”

“The [Cleanbill Report \(January 2025\)](#) reveals that Medicare is no longer delivering on its promise of a free universal health care for all Australians and health insurers want the option of being able to help their members and contribute to a more sustainable primary healthcare system.”

“Alarmingly, today’s Cleanbill report shows that during the present cost-of-living crisis, sick and vulnerable Australians are taking a \$43.38 hit, on average, per GP visit. Patients in some parts of Australia are paying more than \$50 each and every time they see their local doctor and this is simply not acceptable.”

“Members Health funds serve communities throughout regional and rural Australia, as well as the big cities, and we are hearing that Australians are increasingly finding it unaffordable to see their local GP.”

“GPs underpin the health system. They are fundamental to good population health. Putting off a trip to the GP due to expensive out-of-pocket costs can have very serious consequences. It can result in avoidable medical complications, poorer chronic disease management, more severe and prolonged illness, shorter life expectancy and much worse long term health outcomes,” said Mr Koce.

“Every dollar invested in GPs helps improve quality of life while also saving money and boosting economic prosperity and national productivity. It reduces costly admissions to hospital, delivers better healthcare outcomes for Australians and helps people get on with their lives faster.”

Members Health’s landmark [Economic and Social Impact of the Members Health Funds of Australia](#) report released October 2024, called for national reforms to strengthen healthcare and bolster economic prosperity and social wellbeing, including an end to the restrictions placed on health funds being able to help Australians cover out-of-pocket costs when visiting a GP clinic.

Putting members’ health before profit



“2025 will be a federal election year, and Members Health is calling on the major parties vying to be the next Australian Government to outline policies that will help Australians deal with rising medical out-of-pocket costs” Mr Koce said.

Members Health is the peak industry body for health insurance 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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