



Private health insurance reforms: Information provision

Upgrades to privatehealth.gov.au, the development of a Private Health Information Statement for consumers, and making private health insurance product data publicly available will improve access to information

- The Private Health Insurance Ombudsman (PHIO) website privatehealth.gov.au will be redeveloped to better assist consumers to choose a product that best meets their needs.
- A Private Health Information Statement (PHIS) will replace the current Standard Information Statement (SIS) as the regulated method by which insurers provide information to consumers.
- Rules will allow information to be technology neutral to reflect how consumers access information. This means that consumer information can also be provided via email or a hyperlink, as long as it is provided according to regulated timeframes.
- Insurers will now provide insured persons with the following information, on request, rather than in annual statements:
 - a tax statement with details about their private health insurance rebate
 - a Lifetime Health Cover Statement.
- The Rules also require that at least once a year, insurers tell people who have a Lifetime Health Cover loading the period for which their loading will continue to apply.
- Data about health insurance products provided by insurers to the PHIO for use on privatehealth.gov.au will be made publicly available in a consolidated and downloadable format.

Why is this important?

- Consultations conducted by the Department of Health in 2015 revealed that a key concern for consumers related to a poor understanding of private health insurance products.
- Consumers will have a choice in how they receive information and insurers will be able to use the PHIS in whichever format the consumer prefers. The information can be tailored to individuals, which will be more meaningful for consumers.

Who will benefit?

- The redeveloped website will better help consumers to choose the best private health insurance product for their health needs by making it easier to compare multiple products.
- Insurers will have flexibility to provide product information to consumers in a variety of formats and consumers will be able to select how they receive information.

What impact will this change have on private health insurance?

This change is designed to strengthen consumer information.