



Australian Government

Private Health Insurance Ombudsman

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### ***STATE OF THE HEALTH FUNDS REPORT RELEASED***

The Private Health Insurance Ombudsman today released its annual *State of the Health Funds Report*, providing information on the comparative performance and service delivery of private health insurance funds in Australia.

The report, which covers the time period 1 July 2007 – 30 June 2008, revealed an increase in private health cover membership of 1.2% and customer retention rates of between 82-95%, depending on the health insurer.

Private Health Insurance Ombudsman Samantha Gavel said the main aim of publishing the Report was to give consumers additional information to assist them in making decisions about private health insurance.

“Consumer surveys show that people want independent information to assist them with making key decisions about their health insurance,” Ms Gavel said.

“The Report provides an indication of the services available for each fund in their state or territory, as well as a comparison on some service and performance indicators at a fund level,” she said.

Ms Gavel said the report focussed on general performance and service delivery by health funds, rather than detailed information on all health insurance products.

“Now is a good time for consumers to look at their private health insurance and make sure they’ve got the right level of cover to suit their health requirements,” Ms Gavel said.

The Ombudsman recommends that people review their health insurance policy every year to ensure it covers all of the services they may need and continues to provide value for money.

“This is particularly important for people who are thinking of starting a family, or as people get older and their health needs change,” she said.

Detailed information about individual health insurance policies is now available from the consumer website, [www.privatehealth.gov.au](http://www.privatehealth.gov.au). Consumers can use the website to view standard information about their own health insurance policy, as well as compare their policy with other policies available for sale.

The *State of the Health Funds Report* is available on the Ombudsman’s website at [www.phio.org.au](http://www.phio.org.au) and copies of the report or individual fund summary reports can be requested by contacting the Ombudsman’s office on 1300 737 299 for the cost of a local call. The report is available free of charge to consumers.

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