



Australian Government

Private Health Insurance Ombudsman

MEDIA RELEASE

31 March 2010

Reporting of complaints – correction of incorrect media reporting

Private health insurance consumers should note that information detailed in an article (*"Health Insurance Restrictions hit patients with expensive bills"*) appearing in the *Herald Sun* on Tuesday, 30 March 2010 incorrectly suggests there was a 68% increase in the number of complaints made to the Private Health Insurance Ombudsman in the last financial year.

The correct figure as to the level of increase in the number of complaints is 5% and is noted further down in the *Herald Sun* article.

Consumers would rightly be very concerned about an overall increase of 68% in complaints to the private Health Insurance Ombudsman and the use of this incorrect figure has the potential to damage their confidence in their health insurance.

The State of the Health Funds Report 2008/09 does note on page 6 that there was an increase in complaints about "level of cover" issues from 156 in 2007/08 to 262 in 2008/09. This figure applies to a subset of issues only and not to complaints overall. I request that you correct the record on this.

More detailed information about individual health insurance policies is available from the consumer website, 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 Fund Report can be viewed on the Ombudsman's website at 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. The report is available free of charge to consumers.

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