



HIF takes out five CANSTAR awards for outstanding value

Did you know...last September HIF won five of the industry acclaimed CANSTAR awards confirming that we offer great value for money.

CANSTAR's Private Health Insurance Star Ratings combine three separate health insurance product types (Hospital cover, Extras cover, and Packaged Hospital and Extras cover).

The price and features of more than 620 health insurance products from 24 insurers were assessed in the CANSTAR report to determine which funds offer the best value.

CANSTAR awarded HIF Outstanding Value in the following categories:

- [Hospital Cover Western Australia](#)
- [Hospital Cover Victoria](#)

- [Hospital Cover Queensland](#)
- [Hospital & Extras Package Victoria](#)
- [Hospital & Extras Package Queensland](#)

HIF Managing Director Graeme Gibson said he was extremely pleased that his team took out the CANSTAR award for Outstanding Value in Hospital Cover for Queensland and Victoria, as well as Outstanding Value in Hospital and Extras Packages, across both states.

"We also won the WA Outstanding Value Award for our Hospital Cover for the Western Australian region.

It highlights to HIF members what great value for money they are getting and lets non-members know that there are other alternatives to the big funds - and HIF is an excellent one."

A message from HIF's Managing Director Graeme Gibson



It's almost the time when all Australian health funds have to raise premiums to account for the rising cost of health care. You'll no doubt hear a lot about rate-rise percentages, industry averages and 'weighted average increases'. It can be very confusing.

It's tempting to compare health funds based purely on their published weighted average rate rise in a given year, but to review or compare your cover, it's important to look at the detail of your specific cover.

Don't focus solely on the percentage. It doesn't tell you how much your cover has increased. The weighted industry average (the percentage you'll see in comparison tables) is just that – an average.

Focus on value for money. If you're going to compare your cover with cover from other funds, consider all the really important factors, including benefits, annual limits, excesses and customer care.

Consider past performance. If you want to compare different health funds' rate rises, add up the last 5-10 years' worth of rate rises – this will give a clearer idea of who's most competitive. See the graph on page 5.

Don't forget other important figures. It isn't always easy to compare like-for-like covers – many similar covers differ in various ways – but focus on the actual price of similar covers, not the rate rise, versus what you'll get back when you need it.

Look at claim-to-premium levels. What percentage of premiums does a health fund pay back to its members in benefits? This one's important. It tells you a lot, not only about value for money, but also about the priority of the health fund – you. In the 2015/16 year HIF paid back in benefits 94.89% of the premiums we received.

Consider pre-paying your premiums to avoid the rate rise this year. All you have to do is pre-pay your premiums before 1 April. You can pre-pay up to 12 months in advance.

As a not-for-profit health fund, any profits we make go straight back into better benefits and services for you. What's more, we have one of the best claim-to-premium ratios in the industry. That's why I'm confident – whatever happens at rate-rise time – we're among the most competitive, best-value health funds in Australia. For more, visit hif.com.au/premiums2017

Why private health insurance is a good thing



It can be easy to forget the basic benefits of your HIF private health insurance.

Your cover means you are able to:

- **Get treated sooner.**
You don't have to worry about being placed in a queue on the public hospitals waiting list.
- **Choose who treats you, and where.**
You can choose your own doctor and hospital.
- **Improve your personal (and financial) wellbeing.**
You can claim benefits for services that Medicare doesn't cover, like dental and physio, which can have a big impact on your health (and bank balance).

What sets our cover apart?

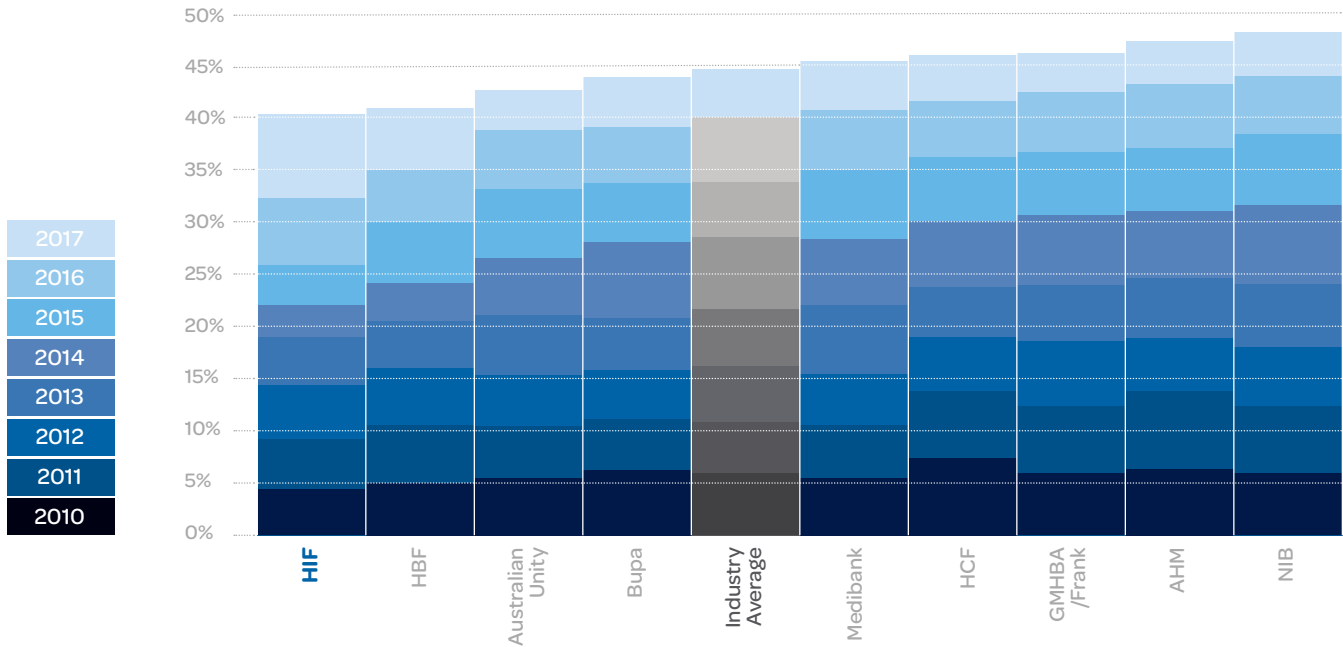
At HIF, we're big enough to provide affordable health cover options that offer more choice and generous benefits, but small enough to make it personal, which means you also get:

- **Great value health cover.** As a not-for-profit fund, we're 100% focused on minimising our operating costs and maximising benefits, services and value for our members.
- **Your choice.** No 'preferred (contracted) providers' for Extras here. We believe you should be able to choose any healthcare provider you want, wherever you want without being disadvantaged.
- **Knowledgeable, personal support.** Whether it's a minor dental treatment or major surgery, we're here for you. Call **1300 13 40 60** or email us at hello@hif.com.au – we're here to help. Or visit our handy online knowledge base at hif.com.au/help – it's packed full of useful info.



2010-17 premium increase comparison

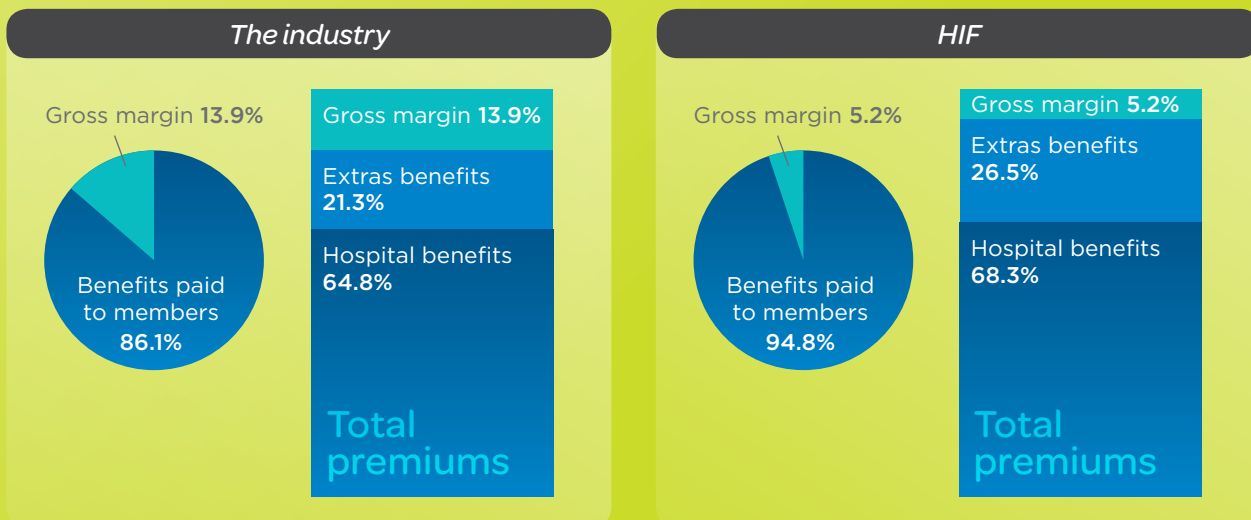
Below is a historical premium increase comparison against HIF's key industry competitors.



* This graph is a stacked representation of the weighted average annual premium increases each year.

Benefits paid to members 2015/16: HIF versus the industry

Below you'll see a breakdown of where health insurance premiums go.



Note: Gross margin is the difference between the premiums collected and the benefits paid out to our members. Gross margins are used to fund the running of the business (staff, business premises, equipment, systems, etc.). HIF is a "not-for-profit" health fund which means any profits can be used to pay more benefits.

Elective surgery waiting times

If you have HIF Hospital cover, you've made a wise choice. Not only do you get to choose your doctor and hospital, you also avoid being placed on the public hospital waiting list queue for elective surgery.

This can be long and can significantly impact your quality of life. Here's a snapshot of the number of days people have waited for surgery:

New South Wales	2014-15	2015-16
Days 50% of people waited up to	54	55
Days 10% of people waited up to	330	328
Percentage who waited more than 365 days	1.6%	2.0%
Victoria	2014-15	2015-16
Days 50% of people waited up to	29	30
Days 10% of people waited up to	177	174
Percentage who waited more than 365 days	2.4%	2.3%
Queensland	2014-15	2015-16
Days 50% of people waited up to	27	29
Days 10% of people waited up to	147	163
Percentage who waited more than 365 days	0.5%	0.4%
Western Australia	2014-15	2015-16
Days 50% of people waited up to	29	30
Days 10% of people waited up to	148	161
Percentage who waited more than 365 days	0.7%	0.8%
South Australia	2014-15	2015-16
Days 50% of people waited up to	37	40
Days 10% of people waited up to	210	233
Percentage who waited more than 365 days	1.1%	1.8%
Tasmania	2014-15	2015-16
Days 50% of people waited up to	55	72
Days 10% of people waited up to	424	452
Percentage who waited more than 365 days	12.9%	15.5%
Australian Capital Territory	2014-15	2015-16
Days 50% of people waited up to	45	n.a.
Days 10% of people waited up to	245	n.a.
Percentage who waited more than 365 days	5.3%	n.a.
Northern Territory	2014-15	2015-16
Days 50% of people waited up to	32	29
Days 10% of people waited up to	217	229
Percentage who waited more than 365 days	3.9%	4.2%
Total*	2014-15	2015-16
Days 50% of people waited up to	35	37
Days 10% of people waited up to	253	260
Percentage who waited more than 365 days	1.8%	2.0%

*For 2015-16, the total excludes data for the Australian Capital Territory, which were not available at the time of publication.
Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare www.aihw.gov.au



Financial fitness

Article by Bessie Hassan
Money and Insurance Expert - Finder.com.au

It's no secret that financial pressure can cause a huge amount of mental stress. In fact, with one in four Australians worried about money, it's important to address these levels of pressure.

Luckily, now is the perfect time to do so. Now that we are well into 2017, thousands of Aussies would have written 'save more money' on their New Year's bucket list. But, how can you make sure this resolution sticks?

What is financial fitness?

Before establishing the best way to go about maintaining your financial fitness, it's important to first know exactly what it entails. Firstly, it's important to realise that good financial health is far more detailed than just drawing up a budget!

Financial fitness involves sharpening your skills in money management, cutting back spending, re-evaluating costs, and planning for the year ahead. This means tracking your earning, spending, and saving habits, and maintaining the changes you make. It's also about realising there is more to money than just being either broke, or wealthy. There is a vast financial scale in between these two paradigms that is a far clearer way of evaluating your money.

How can you get financially fit?

What financial fitness essentially involves is removing or addressing the causes of financial strain in your life. Firstly, consider conducting a

financial audit. Checking your credit score online can assist you in seeing whether your spending habits require a serious overhaul, or whether you're within an alright limit. If your credit score shows that you have a penalty against you due to missing credit card repayments, you may want to consider consolidating your debt. This involves transferring your personal debt over to a loan with a lower interest rate.

See where you can make money back. You can claim your work related expenses through your tax return. For example, if you use your phone constantly day-to-day as part of your job, you should be able to receive a rebate for a portion of your phone plan. Also, if you work from home, there are many home office expenses that are claimable.

And finally, make the most of your insurance! If you're on a package that you feel isn't covering you for what you need, consider making a switch to a higher-value policy that may be more beneficial for you and your health. Have a look at an insurance policy comparison table to see if you could be receiving more extensive extras or benefits.

So you see, financial fitness doesn't necessarily need to be as scary as it may sound. It's simply a matter of lining up your expenses so you can see where your money is being spent.

Don't let financial stress put a dampener on 2017. By establishing good habits now, you'll be able to have a happy and financially healthy New Year year! Good luck.



Crunchy chicken noodles

Recipe

Whether you're going back to school, uni or work, this quick and easy lunch will be enjoyed by little ones and big ones!

Serves 1

Ingredients

- ¼ cup rice vinegar
- 2 tablespoons sesame oil
- 1 teaspoon sugar (optional)
- ¼ iceberg lettuce
- ½ cup cooked chicken breast
- ½ red capsicum
- 1 cup 97% fat-free, two-minute noodles
- ¼ avocado (sprinkled with lemon juice)

Instructions

- 1 Whisk together the vinegar, oil and sugar.
- 2 Mix the salad ingredients (except the avocado and noodles) and drizzle with dressing.
- 3 Top with crunchy noodles and avocado.



How to avoid this year's premium increase

If you want to save money and delay when you have to start paying the new premiums, you can.

All you have to do is pre-pay your premiums before 1 April – and you can pre-pay up to 12 months in advance. To pre-pay your premiums visit hif.com.au/members or call us on **1300 13 40 60**.



Telephone: 1300 13 40 60 | **Web:** hif.com.au | **Email:** hello@hif.com.au

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