



**THE HON NICOLA ROXON MP**  
**Minister for Health and Ageing**  
**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUMS KEPT TO A MINIMUM**  
**INDIVIDUAL FUND INFORMATION PROVIDED**

The Minister for Health and Ageing, Nicola Roxon, has approved private health insurance premium increases to 34 out of 35 health funds by an average of 5.57 per cent, which will take effect from 1 April 2011.

This year's increase is lower than last year (5.78 per cent), lower than CPI increases in hospital and medical services and it is significantly less than the last four years of Tony Abbott's time as health minister, where the average increase was 6.44 per cent.

The benefits paid to private health insurance members increased by 7.7 per cent to \$12.2 billion in 2009-10, while the consumer price index for hospital and medical services in 2010 was 6 per cent. Benefits paid are forecast to further increase by 9.45 per cent for the 12 months ending 31 March 2012, which is significantly more than the average premium increase.

The average premium increases for individual funds will be published by the Government to give consumers further choice and information and can be found at [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au).

The Gillard Government is providing this detail to assist consumers to be more informed and empowered about their private health insurance.

Private health insurance premium applications are assessed by the Government to ensure that increases are the minimum necessary to meet legal requirements such as maintaining the solvency of insurers.

"During the premium process I asked 17 of the 35 health funds to resubmit their applications, which helped reduce the premium increase for 7.9 million Australians," Minister Roxon said.

"One health fund, Australian Unity, has declined my request to reduce their premiums. I am not satisfied that Australian Unity has done all they can to ensure

their customers get a reasonable deal so I'll be asking them to go back and reconsider their position."

Premium increases for policyholders will vary across individual insurers, depending on their policy type. Insurers will contact members, as necessary, to notify them of a change in their premiums.

Consumers are also able to compare the coverage and costs of individual insurance products at [www.privatehealth.gov.au](http://www.privatehealth.gov.au), with the new premium information available on this website from 1 April 2011.

"Under Labor an additional 725,000 people have taken out private hospital insurance with more than 10.1 million Australians now covered, which is the highest number since 1982," Minister Roxon said.

**For more information, contact Ms Roxon's Office: (02) 6277 7220**