

# Australian Health Insurance Association Ltd

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Young Australians Sign Up to PHI in Record Numbers.**

Young Australians are taking out Private Health Insurance in record numbers with the latest statistics showing an additional 155,763 persons under the age of 30 joined health funds during 2007.

Private Health Insurance Administration Council (PHIAC) figures released today show that the proportion of the Australian population taking out PHI continued to rise in the December 2007 quarter, bringing the total number of privately insured Australians to almost 10.8 million.

AHIA Chief Executive Office Hon. Dr Michael Armitage said PHI membership had increased in all States and Territories and all age cohorts during the December 2007 quarter. The largest increases were for insured persons aged 20 to 29 years and 60 to 64 years of age.

Almost one million young Australians aged between 20 -29 now have some form of PHI. In 2007 the number of people in the 20 – 29 age cohort with PHI increased by 9% (75,422) bringing the total to 940,395.

Dr Armitage said the proportion of the total population with Hospital Cover increased by +0.3% from 44.1% to 44.4% in the December 2007 quarter compared to the previous quarter, while General Treatment Cover increased by +2.1% from 46.9% to 49%.

The number of Australians taking out PHI has increased every quarter for the past ten consecutive quarters. In the December 2007 quarter an additional 101,028 (+0.9%) Australians took out PHI bringing the total number of insured persons to a record 10,771,639 or 50.5 % of the population.

Dr Armitage said Australians were taking out PHI in record numbers and recognising the significant contribution the Private Health Care Industry was making to Australia's health system.

Latest data shows that 56 per cent of all surgery in Australia is carried out in private hospitals. Private health funds contributed a record \$9.6 billion to Australia's health system in 2007, an increase of \$935 million or 10.7 %. Private and public hospital admissions funded by PHI increased by 9.2% in 2007, while PHI funding for admission to Public Hospitals alone increased by 11.7 %.

More and more Australians are recognising the importance of Private Health Insurance, as demonstrated by the increase in the number of people taking out both Hospital and General Treatment Cover during 2007.

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