



Australians pay world-highest prices for medical devices

A new report confirms that common medical devices in Australia are much more expensive than in other countries – costing Australian consumers hundreds of millions of dollars every year.

[The Evaluate Report](#), compares the price of common medical devices such as knee and hip replacements, cataract lens and stents with the United Kingdom, New Zealand, South Africa and France. It concludes that Australian consumers are being ripped off by large multinational device companies.

This is only possible because the Australian Government sets the prices of 11,000 items through the Prostheses List, a process the Grattan Institute's Professor Stephen Duckett has described as "part Soviet-era price control and part Monty Python sketch".

Examining a basket of the most common medical devices used in Australia, the report found:

- Australians pay 21% more than the United Kingdom
- Australians pay 38% more than South Africans
- Australians pay 36% more than New Zealanders

On a smaller sample, French prices were lower still. The largest differences in prices were for hip joint replacement parts and drug eluting stents.

Private Healthcare Australia CEO, Dr Rachel David, said. "There is no medical reason the exact same devices should be that much more expensive in Australia. It is a simple result of government regulation keeping prices way too high."

Private Healthcare Australia has put a blueprint to reform medical device pricing to the Australian Government. This blueprint ensures consumers have access to the full range of devices, no out of pocket costs, and pay a fair price.

"Medical device costs are the largest contributor to the rise in private health insurance premiums, and the Morrison Government must do more to protect Australian consumers," said Dr David.

Private Healthcare Australia is the peak representative body for Australia's private health insurance industry. PHA represents 24 Australian health funds with a combined membership of over 13 million Australians, or 97% of the sector on membership.

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