



Press Release

6 November 2017

PHA Appoints Experienced Chair

Private Healthcare Australia has appointed highly respected and experienced Board Chair and Director, Julie-Anne Schafer as Chair of the PHA Board.

PHA Chief Executive Dr Rachel David said the industry was fortunate to secure the skills and expertise of Ms Schafer who was extremely qualified to help guide the private health insurance sector through the implementation phase of the Government's recently announced PHI reforms.

"Ms Schafer is an experienced Chair and Non-Executive Director of diverse and highly regulated sectors such as financial services, infrastructure, member service, health and transport, including RACQ; National Competition Council; National Injury Insurance Agency QLD; QLD Law Society; and the Advisory Council to Energy and Water Ombudsman QLD," said Dr David.

"She has a passion for the healthcare sector and understands the importance of the role of private health insurance in Australia's health system. She has served on the Boards of large private hospitals, overseeing the operation of hospitals, aged care and nursing homes in States and Territories across Australia.

"Ms Schafer will replace Mr Rob Bransby who will retire from the position later this year. Mr Bransby has been instrumental in delivering the best possible outcome for Australia's 13.5 million health fund members during the PHI reform negotiation," said Dr David.

"His expertise in the industry is unparalleled. His involvement and contribution to the PHI reform process has been invaluable. Mr Bransby served as President and Vice President of PHA prior to taking on the role of Chair, and as CEO/Managing Director of HBF Western Australia. He leaves the private health insurance sector in a strong position to continue to advocate for affordable and sustainable healthcare."

Dr David said the industry was entering an exciting and challenging period aimed at improving affordability, participation and the value of PHI for health fund members and delivering positive outcomes across Australia's mixed public-private health system.

"The appointment of Ms Schafer will ensure the professional commitment to reform, demonstrated by the experienced PHA Board under the guidance of Rob Bransby, will be ongoing. The PHA Board has great expertise and skills and represents a cross section of the industry of both profit and not for profit health funds from across the country.

The PHA Board comprises Deputy Chair Rhod McKensy (nib); Andrew Wilson (Medibank); Dwayne Crombie (Bupa); Mark Valena (GMHBA); Gerard Fogarty (Defence Health); Byron Gregory (Health Partners); and Rob Seljak (TUH). The PHI Industry is looking forward to working with Ms Schafer who will take up the position on 24 November 2017.

Private Healthcare Australia is the peak representative body for Australia's private health insurance industry. PHA represents 20 Australian health funds with a combined membership of 12.9 million Australians, or 96% of the sector on membership. Promoting the value of private health insurance to consumers in the Australian economy and keeping premiums affordable for our members is the number one priority of PHA members. PHA's CEO Dr Rachel David is available for interview.

Media contact: Jen Eddy 0439 240 755