



Market Figures

There were 2,166,000 people insured with inpatient health insurance plans at the end of September 2017. This represents an increase in the number of insured people of 26,000 over the past 12 months. The market peaked at almost 2.3 million at the end of 2008.

In addition to those insured with inpatient plans, there were 105,000 insured with products solely providing outpatient benefits or health insurance cash plans.

In-patient health insurance plans	Total Insured 000's
Dec 2008	2,297
Dec 2009	2,260
Dec 2010	2,228
Dec 2011	2,163
Dec 2012	2,099
Dec 2013	2,049
Dec 2014	2,025
Dec 2015	2,122
Mar 2016	2,126
June 2016	2,133
Sept 2016	2,140
Dec 2016	2,152
Mar 2017	2,156
June 2017	2,157
Sep 2017	2,166

Based on CSO population estimates, the percentage of the population with inpatient health insurance plans stands at 45.1% at end September 2017 compared to 2008 peak of 50.9%.

Market News

Price changes

Laya Healthcare will decrease premiums across the following schemes by an average of 6.1% on adult net premiums on 1 December 2017; Company Care Plus, Connect Care, Control 300 Create, Simply Connect Plus, Simply Health Plus, Total Health Complete 175, Total Health Extra, Total Health Plus.

The child premiums on Vhi's PMI 31 12 will reduce from €389.19 per child (child 1-3) to €340.73 per child (child 1-3) on 1 December 2017.

Vhi Healthcare reduced the premiums of 21 plans on 1 November 2017. Adult premium reductions ranged from -1 to -9%. Vhi Healthcare also ended its half price kids offer on the "One Plan" range on this date with the exception of "One Plan Family" (€156.13) which will continue. Young adult rates for 18-20 year olds also reduced.

Laya Healthcare carried out premium amendments on 2 plans on 1 November 2017. ConnectCare 100 increased from €1,298.96 to €1,358.63 per adult and from €420.85 to €441.59 per child 1 and 2, and from €351.88 to €365.89 per child 3 and 4. Essential Connect Health's half price kid's offer ended. Children's prices increased to €377.94 per child.



Industry News

HIA Advertising campaign

The Health Insurance Authority will be running a radio, online and tv advertising campaign commencing the end of November and running through December 2017. The campaign aims to encourage consumers to use our website to explore their cover and save money by choosing a plan that suits their needs.

Additionally, a consumer information video, which can be viewed on our site (bit.ly/LCR_Video) and on our Youtube channel, was released in September 2017 on community rating and lifetime community rating with a supporting advertising campaign. The lifetime community rating campaign ran from 18 September to 28 October 2017. The campaign included video on demand on RTE, TV3, SkyGO and Facebook video. Online display on the RTE website included takeover and billboard elements. Online search advertising also ran through September and October 2017. Radio advertisements ran for three weeks and finished 8th of October and were spread across the daily schedule on Newstalk, Today FM and Radio One.

New plans

Irish Life Health will release three new plans on 1 December 2017; BeneFit 1 (€799 per adult, €200 per child), BeneFit 2 (€875 per adult, €220 per child) and BeneFit (€999 per adult, €240 per child). Each plan provides cover for a semi-private room in selected private hospitals and the Beacon Hospital with an inpatient excess per claim, which varies by plan. These plans offer money back on a range of five health and lifestyle benefits including dietician or nutritionist consultations, life coaching sessions, fitness wearables, sports club or gym membership / classes and sports massage.

Laya Healthcare will release a new plan CompanyCare Advanced (€4,300 per adult, €900 per child) on 1 December 2017. This plan provides full cover for a private room in all public and private hospitals. There are significant outpatient benefits and outpatient benefits which carry a 50% refund benefit will see the refund increase to 75% refund when outpatient claims exceed €315.

Vhi will launch two new plans PMI 01 10 (€1,588.10 per adult, €375.14 per child 1-3) and PMI 02 10 (€1,295.84 per adult, €328.42 per child 1-3) on 1 December 2017. Both plans provide cover for a private room in a public hospital and cover for a semi-private room in a private hospital with an excess of €125 per private hospital claim on the PMI 02 10 plan. These plans also provide significant cover for outpatient benefits.

Report on Lifetime Community Rating

Lifetime Community Rating was introduced to the Irish market on 1 May 2015. This means that people aged 35 and upwards taking out health insurance for the first time, will be charged a late entry loading of 2% of the gross premium for each year in age over 34 they have attained. Credit is given for previous periods of cover. This means that a 50-year-old who has held private health insurance since they were aged 30 pays the same premium as a 30-year-old, but a 50 year old that purchases private health insurance for the first time at age 50 pays more than a 30-year-old.

The Health Insurance Authority carried out a public consultation process on Lifetime Community Rating in early 2017 in order to review the legislation, and received 23 submissions from interested parties and stakeholders. The report was submitted to the Department of Health in May 2017 and published recently on our website.

The report makes a number of recommendations, such as providing a credit for individuals who have spent periods abroad, a provision to provide a credit for gaps in insurance of up to three years and a suggestion to limit loadings to a period of 10 years. The full list of recommendations can be viewed in our report here bit.ly/LCR_Report_2017.