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Kiwis Want Healthcare “Peace of Mind” - But Are Reluctant To Pay

UniMed is Canstar’s 2020 winner of Most Satisfied Customers, Health Insurance award

Kiwis, facing a global pandemic and public health system under strain, are turning to private health insurance. But even as they appreciate the comfort it brings, they remain frustrated by the cost.

According to Canstar’s survey to find 2020’s winner of Most Satisfied Customers, Health Insurance, more than 60% of Kiwis are seeking “peace of mind”, knowing they will be able to get immediate care when required.

Further, one in five New Zealanders have used their insurance for serious illness, and nearly 60% say they were happy with the claims process. Around a third of adults have health insurance, while nearly a quarter also have it for their children. Further, the value Kiwis place on having cover is clear, with more than a quarter of respondents saying they would sacrifice spending in other areas before relinquishing their health care policy.

However, Kiwis are cautious about spending on health insurance, with the perception of Value for Money being the single biggest driver of satisfaction. More than half of Kiwis, at 55%, thought insurance was getting too expensive and 28% said they can only afford a surgery and specialist policy, with broader cover being more expensive.

“We know Kiwis are somewhat reluctant to spend on health insurance,” said Jose George, Canstar NZ General Manager. “Our public health system is good, and Kiwis rely on it.

“But there’s no doubt health insurance can make life a lot easier at extremely difficult times. And, insurance providers are working hard to offer Kiwis cover that fits their budget, and gives us what we want - comfort at times of stress.”

Dermot Martin, chief executive of UniMed, said that while the public health system works well for urgent health requirements, those with less urgent needs end up waiting, given the demands on our health services. “Medical Insurance provides valuable peace of mind, enabling you to get back to living your life without having to wait around for publicly funded treatment.

“It can also provide immediate financial relief for the day-to-day health care expenses such as GPs, optical and dental care, which helps you budget for these irregular expenses,” he said.

Mr Martin said that since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, “We have certainly seen continued interest from individuals and employers, looking at UniMed’s Medical Insurance options. We have also seen

members doing whatever they can to retain their cover, even if they have lost all or part of their income. UniMed has been able to provide a range of financial assistance options to members and business clients to help them retain their cover.”

Mr Martin added that he was delighted at UniMed’s performance in Canstar’s award and paid particular tribute to his people. “We have a really tight-knit group here who all do their bit to help our members. It’s a team effort and I’m so pleased their efforts have been recognised with this award. Everyone is always thinking about how we can improve our service to members.”

For further details please visit the Canstar NZ site, [here](#).

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