

**MEDIA RELEASE****HCF shows parliamentary committee the long-term benefits of chronic disease management program**

**Sydney, 25 August 2015** – Australia’s largest non-profit private health insurer, HCF, has highlighted the economic and health benefits of its *MyHealth Guardian* (MHG) program to a parliamentary committee investigating best practice in chronic disease prevention and management.

MHG is a \$100 million program launched by HCF in 2009 that provides phone-based support from registered nurses to approximately 25,000 HCF members suffering from chronic conditions such as diabetes and heart disease. The program also provides members with tailored assistance, including access to a web-based customised health records, health risk assessments and personalised health coaching, to better manage existing conditions and adopt healthier behaviours.

Detailed, peer-reviewed evaluations pointing to the positive impact of the program on chronically ill participants mean HCF can provide a unique and significant contribution to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health’s current [inquiry](#) into chronic disease prevention and management in primary health care.

A recent study, published in [BMC Health Services Research](#), documenting the long-term impact of MHG showed participation over a four-year period resulted in an 11% reduction in hospital admissions and a 37% drop in readmissions within 30 days of prior admissions.

HCF Managing Director, Shaun Larkin said with MHG, as one of the largest programs of its types conducted in Australia, providing a rich source of data to draw on, HCF was keen to engage with policy-makers in improving management of chronic illness in Australia.

“MHG is a reference tool for healthcare participants - insurers, governments and healthcare providers alike – exploring how best to deliver similar scalable and sustainable programs. A long-term reduction in hospital admissions eases pressure on the health system, and leaves Australia better placed to address the challenge of an ageing population and an increasing prevalence of chronic health conditions,” Mr Larkin said.

HCF developed MHG after health reforms introduced in 2007 allowed insurers to offer programs to help those suffering from chronic illness achieve a better quality of life.

“We encourage other funds to explore similar options to keep members healthy. Programs like MHG are our way of ensuring insurance remains affordable for all Australians and community-rated premiums remain viable,” he said.

***Issued on behalf of HCF by Sefiani Communications Group. Media inquiries to Karen Dunicliff on ph. (02) 8920 0700, mob. 0435 807 761 or [kdunicliff@sefiani.com.au](mailto:kdunicliff@sefiani.com.au)***

***About HCF***

*HCF is Australia’s largest non-profit health insurer, currently covering more than 1.5 million Australians. To learn more about HCF go to <http://www.hcf.com.au/about-us>.*