

Date:	8 October 2002
Subject	Ramsay Health Care & NIB make progress for members

NIB Health Fund member concerns about the contract dispute between NIB and the Ramsay Health Care group have been the subject of today's discussions with the Private Health Insurance Ombudsman.

All parties agreed that NIB members will not be required to pay 100% up front charges for any procedures at Ramsay hospitals.

Today's discussions confirmed that:

- Bookings made prior to September 22 for general procedures will be covered under current contract rates until November 22.
- Bookings made prior to September 22 for psychiatric, chemotherapy, rehabilitation and dialysis admissions will be honoured under current contract rates until December 22.
- All obstetric bookings made prior to September 22 will be honoured.
- Bookings made between now and October 22 for admissions prior to October 22 will be honoured under current contract rates.
- Bookings made at Lake Macquarie Private between now and October 22 for admissions post-October 22 may require an out-of-pocket payment representing any difference between NIB's current offer and Ramsay's new charges.
- Any costs for admissions to other Ramsay hospitals after October 22 were still subject to further discussion, but this would be restricted to an out-of-pocket payment.

NIB's Chief Executive Officer, Mr Mark Fitzgibbon, said the information on any difference payable would be available from NIB's Member Care Centre (13 14 63).

He also encouraged any NIB member requiring hospital treatment to discuss options with NIB prior to booking an admission.

"We have had some fruitful discussions today with the Ombudsman and privately with Ramsay CEO, Pat Grier," Mr Fitzgibbon said. "There is much goodwill and hopefully this will result in us negotiating new arrangements in the not too distant future."

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