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Subject nib introduces flexible staffing model to help meet customer service needs

In a first for the private health insurance industry, nib health funds limited (nib) has introduced a remote agent workforce for its Customer Contact Centre to help meet customer service needs.

The flexible employee model will see 37 casual remote agents trained to provide call centre services from home, adding to the already 107 strong call centre employees located at nib's national headquarters in Newcastle.

nib Chief Executive Officer, Mark Fitzgibbon, said the innovative workforce model will provide increased flexibility for nib to respond to changes in customer service levels.

"These new remote employees will have the capacity to dial into the call centre in within minutes allowing us to meet customer service demands during planned and unplanned periods of increased call volumes and customer enquiries," Mr Fitzgibbon said.

"This will improve the service experience for nib customers by reducing call waiting times and increasing service efficiencies," he added.

Remote agents will be provided will full training and secure remote access to directly link them as part of the nib Customer Contact Centre.

The new employee model will also provide a cost effective means of managing employee levels in the call centre by reducing the risk of overstaffing, minimising overtime and preventing employee shortfalls.

"Despite the best forecasting efforts, the factors that influence call demand are not always predictable which creates difficulties when rostering employees," Mr Fitzgibbon said.

"This model removes such uncertainties and allows us to be prepared for any situation at the click of a button."

The work-from-home model is also expected to provide greater work/life balance for nib employees, with the new technology creating increased flexibility and the ability to work outside of an office setting.

The remote agent workforce began working from home in December 2010.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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