



Mr. Billy Hannigan
Deputy General Secretary
Public Service Executive Union (PSEU)
30 Merrion Square
Dublin 2

23 March 2018

Our Ref: AD170033

Dear Mr. Hannigan,

Thank you for your letter regarding the motion on Lifetime Community Rating of Health Insurance Policies adopted at the PSEU's annual delegate conference in 2017. I am keenly aware of the importance of this issue because of the potential impact on officers serving the state abroad and on their families.

My Department has engaged extensively on this issue with the Department of Health and made a comprehensive submission to the Health Insurance Authority (HIA) review on the Lifetime Community Rating (LCR) system. In December 2017, the Health Insurance (Amendment) Act 2017 was passed and a Statutory Instrument is currently being prepared. The resultant legislative changes, which are expected to be implemented in quarter 3 of this year, will ensure that:

- Loadings will not apply to individuals returning to Ireland following an absence abroad of 6 months or more, provided health insurance is purchased within 9 months of taking up residence in Ireland;
- Breaks in health insurance cover of at least 6 months whilst living in the state, up to a cumulative total of 3 years, will not incur loadings on resumption, provided a minimum period of health insurance cover is held of not less than 3 years before being able to avail of breaks in cover;



- Any loadings incurred will now be payable for 10 years rather than a lifetime.

From the perspective of officers serving the state overseas and their families, these provisions are very positive and should effectively resolve the Lifetime Community Rating issue. However, I have asked that the matter be kept under review.

Yours sincerely,

Simon Coveney T.D.
Tánaiste
Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade