



# Laya cuts prices on some health plans in move to squeeze rivals

THE second-largest health insurer in the market is to cut prices on some plans and freeze the cost of others for two years.

Laya is reducing prices by up to 10pc on a small number of plans, the *Irish Independent* has learned.

The move by Laya will put pressure on rivals, especially after a number of price rises announced recently by competitors Aviva and GloHealth.

Only last year Laya announced a price freeze on plans that cover treatment in public hospitals. However, this is the first time Laya is to hold prices for two years on plans that cover treatment in private and public hospitals.

It will mean that someone who signs up to a health plan on which prices are frozen will be able to renew it in 2017 at the same price that is being charged now.

The insurer, which has more than half a million members, is cutting prices on four plans and freezing prices on another four.

The price freezes will take effect from January and will apply to existing and new customers.

Specialist health insurance broker **Dermot Goode** said Laya was the first health insurer to freeze prices on a plan that covers treatment in both public and private hospitals.

He said the Flex 175 Explore plan, which was now subject to a price freeze, was a good-value plan. However, there is an excess on this scheme that means those making a claim for treatment overnight in a hospital will have to cover the first €175 of the cost.

Mr Goode also said Laya's Connect Choice and Essential Connect Family plans, on which prices are being reduced,

offered value and reasonable benefits.

Mr Goode, of TotalHealth-Cover.ie, added: "For someone who just wants to lock cover down for two years, they are the first insurer to offer this option on a public/private hospital plan."

The cost reductions on some Laya plans and the freezing of prices on others come as VHI, Aviva and GloHealth all announced rate hikes in the past few months. Laya also announced price rises on a number of plans this year.

The price freeze means that a family of two adults and two children who sign up for the Flex 175 Explore plan will pay €2,500 next year and the same again in 2017.

A family who opt for Laya's Connect Choice will save €150 on the plan. The total cost of this scheme comes to €3,044 for a family of two adults and two children.

Laya Healthcare managing director Donal Clancy claimed his company was championing affordability and choice in the health insurance market.

**Charlie Weston**  
Personal Finance Editor



**Laya is reducing prices by up to 10pc on a small number of plans**