

Monday 8 August 2016

Credibility in question: Medibank launches attack on surgeons using incorrect data

Insurance giant Medibank Private has quoted incorrect data to launch an unfair attack against medical specialists and the fees they charge.

The insurer today hit out at surgeons saying specialist fees in Australia are too high and are therefore not competitive with fees for surgery in other countries.

Medibank quoted figures from a 2013 International Federation of Health Plans report which showed cataract surgery on average cost \$79 more in Australia than in the US.

In doing so the insurer ignored the fact that a more recent report has been issued by the International Federation of Health Plans (in 2015) which shows Australia now ranks behind both the US and the UK on cataract surgery costs.

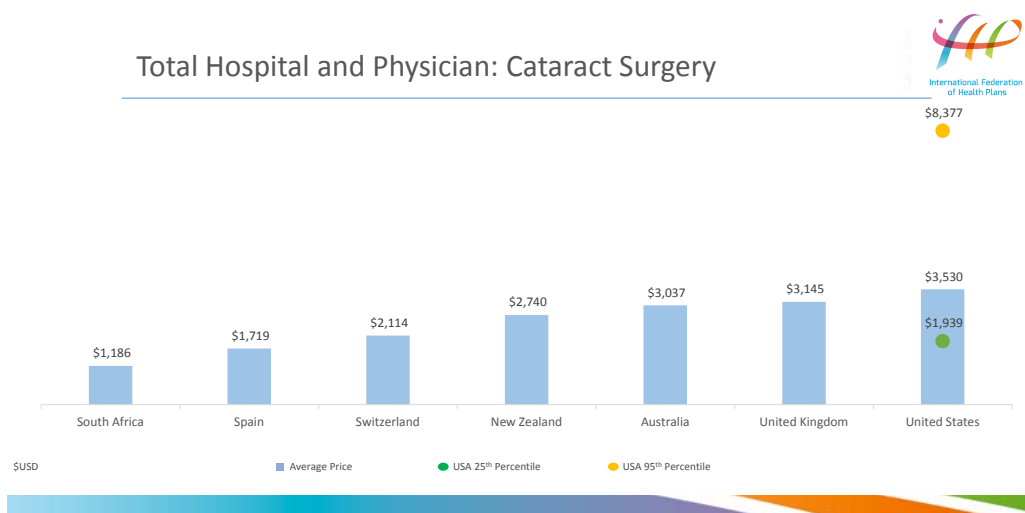
ASO President Dr Michael Steiner said Medibank had been disingenuous in its attempt to tarnish the reputation of Australian surgeons. This is just another case of misinformation from Medibank.

“This is the insurer who is facing legal action from the ACCC over alleged misleading and unconscionable conduct,” Dr Steiner said.

“It is also the insurer who, in 2010 decided to restrict cover for cataract surgery for 300,000 of its policy holders,” he said.

“Consumers deserve to have access to healthcare providers who are open and accountable; no doctor will have an argument with that. Medibank’s credibility in this area, however, must be seriously questioned,” Dr Steiner said.

Source: 2015 International Federation of Health Plans Price Report



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