



**HEALTHIER, LONGER,
BETTER LIVES**

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Media Release

AIA Australia launches virtual mental health service to address growing crisis

Melbourne, 27 November 2024 – AIA Australia has announced its latest offering to address the urgent need for more timely and affordable mental health support in Australia. The leading life, health and wellbeing insurer will offer My Psychologist, a virtual mental health support service, to its life insurance customers and their immediate family members.

The offering is facilitated by Online Psychologists Australia and will provide virtual consultations with qualified psychologists. The service will also assist with referrals for a Mental Health Care Plan by connecting members to a telehealth GP, if needed.

For several years, mental ill-health has been the main reason that Australians visit their General Practitioner¹, however their ability to access a psychologist is hindered due to extensive wait times and the associated costs. My Psychologist has been developed to address these issues, aiming to provide users with an appointment with a psychologist within seven days for a reduced out-of-pocket fee of \$60 through Medicare, for those with a Mental Health Care Plan.

One in five Australians aged 15-85 experience a mental illness in any given year² and the demand for mental health services in Australia is growing rapidly. In 2023, 30 percent³ of adults were accessing support services for psychologists, psychiatrists and counsellors. However, they are often waiting up to 3 months to see a psychologist, with some waiting more than six months⁴. One in three psychologists are so busy they've had to close their books, compared to one in 100 before the pandemic⁵.

Mental health disorders account for 20 per cent of AIA Australia's life insurance claim book, making it the second most claimed condition. Over the past decade, the proportion of mental health claims has increased from one in ten claims in 2014 to one in four in 2024.

Damien Mu, CEO of AIA Australia emphasised the significance of launching My Psychologist as part of the insurer's wellbeing ecosystem, AIA Embrace.

"AIA Australia has a proven commitment to help Australians lead healthier, longer, better lives. We're proud to announce that we have taken an important step in the life insurance industry to improve access to mental health support in Australia," Mu said.

"In line with our focus on prevention and health promotion, we recognise the significant impact that seeking the right treatment at the earliest opportunity can have on an individual's overall health.

"The launch of My Psychologist for our life insurance customers and their immediate family members is a step to address the unprecedented demand for qualified psychological services. This service will ensure users can access mental health support in a timely manner, providing them with a sense of empowerment and professional care during their mental health journey."

¹ [RACGP Health of the Nation survey, 2024.](#)

² Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, [Prevalence and impact of mental illness.](#)

³ Mental Health Australia, [Report to the Nation 2023 by Ipsos Public Affairs.](#)

⁴ [Australian Psychological Society](#), February 2022.

⁵ [Australian Psychological Society](#), February 2022.



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Members of superannuation fund HESTA will be among the first to access the service and HESTA's Chief Experience Officer Lisa Samuels said My Psychologist can greatly support the Fund's members.

"HESTA has more than one million members, many of whom work in the health and community services sector. Due to the demanding nature of their roles, some of these members can often face mental health challenges. This can lead to them taking extended time out of the workforce. HESTA analysis shows that poor mental health can result in as much as a 27 per cent reduction in members' super savings at retirement," Ms Samuels said.

"By partnering with AIA Australia in the My Psychologist program, our aim is to better support HESTA members by connecting them with affordable and accessible mental health support, so they can receive help when they need it."

AIA's My Psychologist is available now. To speak with a psychologist, visit <https://www.onlinepsychologist.com.au/aia>

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About AIA Australia

AIA Australia is a leading life insurance specialist with 50 years' experience and a purpose to make a difference in people's lives. In 2014 the company launched AIA Vitality, a world leading, science-based health and wellbeing program, to the Australian market. In July 2017, AIA and its partners launched AIA's health insurance business, now known as AIA Health Insurance.

In 2021, Commlnsure Life was integrated into AIA Australia. The lives of more than 3.1 million Australians are protected and enhanced through AIA Australia's holistic value proposition of life, health and wellbeing. Our vision is to embrace shared value in championing Australia to be the healthiest and best protected nation in the world.

In pursuit of this, AIA Australia has developed AIA Embrace - a comprehensive wellbeing ecosystem of world-class products, programs and partnerships. These are designed to help customers, partners and the broader community to embrace better health and wellbeing.

In offering a broad range of health and wellbeing services to its customers, partners and broader community, AIA is proudly helping people lead healthier, longer, better lives.

AIA Australia has been recognised with multiple awards, including the ANZIIF Life Insurance Company of the Year (2024, 2023, 2022), GoodCompany Award – Top 40 (2024), Women in Finance Employer of the Year Award (2018, 2019), Super Review's Best Insurer of the Year (2018, 2019), FSC Life Insurance Industry Awards Innovation in Group Life Insurance (2021), Shared Value Awards Organisation of the Year (2020) and Shared Value Project of the Year (2021).

Further information at www.aia.com.au.

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About HESTA

HESTA is one of the largest superannuation funds dedicated to Australia's health and community services sector. An industry fund that's run only to benefit members, HESTA now has more than one million members (around 80% of whom are women) and currently manages approximately \$88 billion* in assets invested around the world.

*Information is current as at the date of issue.