

Healthcare goes online

<http://www.bizreview.com.au/login.aspx?ATL://20090903000031510964>

Thursday, 03 September 2009 | BRW | Kath Walters

PRIVATE health insurance company HCF has taken advantage of changes to health insurance legislation, made in 2007, to introduce a new online service to manage its customers' health.

Known as disease management, the aim is to better manage patients with chronic illnesses too prevent them having acute medical episodes and to steer the young and healthy away from the lifestyle factors such as over-eating, smoking, drinking and lack of exercise that can lead to chronic illness.

Using the online service, HCF members will be able to obtain information from nurses, dieticians and exercise physiologists to help them change their lifestyles.

HCF's new service offers help to patients with chronic diseases including diabetes, asthma and heart disease. Many general practitioners have been against the disease-management model of care, saying they already practice preventative health, and that patient care should be co-ordinated by doctors, not allied health professionals. HCF says the service is intended to complement care by GPs.