

20 May 2020

Casey Mazzarella
Inquiry Secretary
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Economics
Department of the House of Representatives
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Via email: economics.reps@aph.gov.au

Dear Ms Mazzarella

House Economics Committee: Review of insurance sector - response to questions in writing

Thank you for your letter of 6 May 2020 regarding the Committee's request to respond to questions in writing.

Our responses to your questions are attached.

The questions reference a draft report of the Productivity Commission on Mental Health in Australia. We would like to draw the Committee's attention to the Productivity Commission's draft recommendation in relation to permitting life insurers to fund health services, including mental health services, such as psychological or psychiatric counselling (draft recommendation 24.6).

Despite the important role that life insurers can play in supporting people with mental health conditions, life insurers are generally prohibited by existing regulatory frameworks from providing funding for psychological or psychiatric counselling for our customers. MetLife recommends that these legislative constraints be reformed so that life insurers can fund the provision of health services to customers, and facilitate customers returning to wellness. We ask that the Committee consider this as part of its deliberations.

Any service that is provided to customers following such reforms would of course have to be provided by an appropriate registered health provider, with fully informed patient consent and in consultation with the customer's medical team.

Please do not hesitate to contact Cathy Duloy, Head of Public Policy at Cathy.Duloy@MetLife.com if you have further queries on these responses.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Nunn
Chief Executive Officer