

Honorific Mx a match for those who identify as ‘other’

PAIGE TAYLOR THE AUSTRALIAN 12:00AM October 5, 2016

A Perth-based health insurance company has become the first in Australia to recognise customers who do not identify as male or female, offering a third gender category on all its forms and the honorific Mx — pronounced “Mux” — for those who do not want a traditional title such as Miss, Mr, Mrs, Dr, Prof or Rev.

HIF, the third-fastest growing health insurance company in Australia, said it had decided to allow new members to select “other” instead of male or female against their personal recorded information.

All other member forms — paper and online — will be updated to include the third gender category, HIF managing director Graeme Gibson said.

He said the decision was made “following recent feedback from the LGBTI community and a confirmation among HIF’s leadership that HIF is committed to tailoring its offerings to individual preferences and/or circumstances”.

“HIF members may select the ‘other’ gender option if they choose to identify as neither male nor female, including ... those who are agender, androgyne, bigender, gender fluid, intersex, neutrois, non-binary, pangender or transgender,” Mr Gibson said.

The Australian Passport Office already allows Australian citizens to identify themselves on their passports as M, F or X. This year’s census was the first to offer a third gender category.

In announcing HIF’s decision, Mr Gibson said making these changes was an important way forward for HIF, to honour the company’s “commitment to championing inclusion, diversity and equality in the community, and to keep evolving with societal changes”.

HIF is a not-for-profit private fund that began in 1954 as the Western Australian Government Railways Employees Hospital and Medical Benefits Fund.

Data published by the Australian Prudential Regulatory Authority in 2014 found HIF was the third-fastest growing health fund out of all 35 funds in Australia.