



The Irish Travel Guide

- *Multi Trip from Vhi Healthcare increases market share to 35%*
 - *11% of the population travelling for business*

May 31, 2006 – Vhi Healthcare today announced that it has captured 35% of the multi-trip travel insurance market, an increase of 9% since 2004, and that 250,000 members have taken out Multi Trip from Vhi Healthcare policies since the product was launched two years ago. To mark this achievement Vhi Healthcare commissioned TNS MRBI to conduct research into the travel insurance market in Ireland that identified patterns for the leisure, business and longer-term travel arrangements of just over 1,000 respondents.

The study found that approximately 38% of the population holds a travel insurance policy but that the market dynamics have changed substantially in recent years with those holding annual insurance policies growing from 40% to 51%, indicating that the annual travel insurance market is expanding at the expense of the single trip market.

The three most important areas identified for those taking out annual travel insurance policies remain unchanged with provision for unexpected medical emergencies /illnesses, lost passport and personal luggage as the key areas consumers wish to cover themselves against.

Key Findings

Leisure:

64% of the population travel for leisure each year and the average number of trips per annum is two. Higher than average travel is seen among males aged 25-34 and ABC1's. Europe is the main destination. 46% of those traveling for leisure purposes do not hold any travel insurance.

Business:

11% of the population travel for business purposes. The average number of business trips is higher than those for leisure, averaging 3 per year. Those traveling are most likely to be male, in the age group 35-44 and ABC1. The UK is the main business destination.

Holiday Homes:

3% of the population have holiday homes and the average stay per annum is 5.25 weeks. Only 37% of them have travel insurance and the main locations for holiday homes are Spain, UK, France, USA, Turkey, Portugal and Bulgaria.

Vhi Healthcare also issued some interesting data on the claims patterns of Multi Trip from Vhi Healthcare policyholders since the product launched in 2004. In total, Vhi Healthcare has paid out approximately €3.8 million in claims to Multi Trip members. In 2005 alone Vhi healthcare paid out approximately €2 million. Over 10,000 claims were processed.

Examples include:

- A claim for emergency medical treatment in the U.S. totalling €93,000,
- A personal accident claim for €16,000
- A cancellation claim for €5500.

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An analysis of claims made by customers of Multi Trip from Vhi Healthcare in 2005 revealed:

- 60% of claims were for cancellation or curtailment of a trip
- 17% of claims were for medical expenses
- 13% of claims were for lost baggage
- 1% were for baggage delays
- 1% were for lost money

Declan Moran, Director of Marketing and Business Development, Vhi Healthcare, stated; "Vhi Healthcare revolutionised the market for travel insurance in Ireland by effectively cutting the costs in half. However we would urge the 46% of the population that travel abroad for leisure purposes without any travel insurance to consider the risks involved in doing so. When choosing a travel insurance policy study the terms and conditions carefully and make sure that you are fully covered for unexpected medical emergencies and illnesses arising from pre-existing conditions. Many products on the market do not cover for such eventualities."

He continued, "We would also urge the public to ensure that they renew their policy when it expires and don't wait until the last minute to make sure you are covered in the event of cancellation or curtailment. Our research shows that 60% of the claims made by Vhi policyholders were for this very reason underlining the importance of ensuring your policy does not lapse. "

Launched in February 2004, Vhi Healthcare Multi Trip has quickly been established as market leader of the multi trip travel insurance sector with an estimated 35% market share in this area. Vhi Multi Trip is available exclusively to Vhi members and further information on Vhi Multi Trip is available on www.vhi.ie.

Ends

Issued by:
Barbara Coyle
Corporate Communications Manager
Vhi Healthcare
Ph: 01 6197473 / 086 8371701
E: barbara.coyle@vhi.ie