



The world is changing fast. Protection also needs to.

Given the age of volatility we live in, protection needs to move with the times, writes Vitality's Chief Growth and Operations Officer Greg Levine

As we move into 2024, the economic outlook is still a challenging one, with the ongoing cost-of-living crisis continuing to impact households.

From a health perspective, the country is not getting healthier¹ and there are now record numbers out of work due to long-term sickness².

Despite the challenges we face as a nation, it's crucial that the protection market steps up. Households require greater financial resilience and now is the time to seize the opportunity and make a positive impact, for consumers and society.

How is protection insurance evolving?

On the one hand, people are living for longer, but often in poorer health³, and advancements in screening and medical science mean we are more likely to survive illnesses that would have once been fatal.

Consumer needs have also shifted, driven by wider trends shaping the way people live and work, impacting many of the traditional insurance triggers.

For this reason, traditional protection insurance products have needed a rethink.

The fact 1 in 12 Serious Illness Cover claims in 2022 were people claiming for a second or third time highlights why our continuity of cover is a benefit that really stands out in the market⁴. We're now also the only provider offering the ability to claim more than once for 100% of benefit amount, (under SIC 2X and SIC 3X)⁵.

Elsewhere, we see increasing numbers of people living with dementia and a growing later life care crisis, calling for innovative insurance-based solutions.

Over 70,000 of our members are now protected with our unique Dementia and Frailcare Cover, giving them the option to continue cover beyond the term of their plan⁴.

Income protection is also rightly now recognized as the cornerstone of any protection planning. But plans must move with a client as their circumstances change. Offering more flexible GIOs, ensuring guaranteed benefit amounts and helping clients to stay healthy and productive in the workplace, while also being there with both physical and financial support for when things do go wrong.

Shared Value and the benefits of engagement



Consumers are also increasingly looking for unique, meaningful experience-based purchases that offer regular opportunities for on-demand engagement and deliver more immediate value.

Benefits that sit alongside and are integral to a client's cover, such as the Vitality Programme, help to provide real immediate tangible value from day one.

When you have such a comprehensive range of benefits, there are also greater opportunities for engagement, which drives far greater retention.

It is no longer enough for insurers to just pay claims and for distributors to treat protection advice simply as a one-off transaction. Through engagement with the Vitality Programme, we see 39% less cancellations for our most engaged members⁴.

As protection products move forward and deliver more comprehensive cover, that gives your client's value and benefits today, there's never been a better time for advisers to also move their businesses forward through more thorough protection advice.

Supporting your client conversations

To support your client conversations, we have a range of resources available which you can [access here](#)

Watch on-demand: Growing your protection business in a challenging market

Catch up on the first edition of our new webinar series, 'Forward Thinking with Vitality', where our panel of industry experts explored how advisers can maximise the opportunities, to ensure their businesses thrive in an ever-challenging market, whilst delivering the best outcomes for their clients.

[Watch the webinar](#)

¹ [Health in 2040: projected patterns of illness in England - The Health Foundation](#)

² [Rising ill-health and economic inactivity because of long-term sickness, UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)



³ Health in 2040: projected patterns of illness in England, July 2023

⁴ VitalityLife Claims and Benefits Report 2023

⁵ Defaqto Matrix, 2023