

December 12, 2017

F&TRC LAUNCHES 2017 PROTECTION RATINGS AND FACT SHEETS

- PROVIDERS AWARDED GOLD, SILVER AND BRONZE MEDALS FOR NINE DIFFERENT TYPES OF PROTECTION PRODUCTS

F&TRC has announced its independent 2017 product provider ratings for Business Protection, Business Protection with Critical Illness, Family Income Benefit, Family Income Benefit with Critical Illness, Life Cover, Life Cover with Critical Illness, Mortgage Protection, Mortgage Protection with Critical Illness and Relevant Life. The ratings have been designed to help advisers understand which providers are offering the most suitable and comprehensive protection products and assist them with their client recommendations.

Each provider has been awarded either a Gold, Silver or Bronze medal for both their overall proposition as well as in several important underlying categories. These categories, and the metrics used to assess the providers, were selected after consultation with a range of independent experts and adviser firms. The overall awards in the F&TRC ratings are:

	Gold	Silver	Bronze
Business Protection	AIG, Aviva, Legal & General, Royal London, Zurich	LV=, Scottish Widows, Vitality	Aegon
Business Protection with Critical Illness	AIG, Aviva (upgraded), Royal London, Vitality (Business Protection with booster), Zurich	Aviva, Legal & General, LV=, Scottish Widows	Aegon

	Gold	Silver	Bronze
Family Income Benefit	Aviva, LV=, Royal London	AIG, Scottish Widows, Vitality	Aegon, Legal & General, Zurich
Family Income Benefit with Critical Illness	AIG, Aviva (upgraded), Royal London, Scottish Widows, Vitality (comprehensive with booster)	Aegon, Aviva, LV=, Vitality (primary without booster)	Legal & General, Zurich
Life Cover	Aviva, LV=, Royal London	AIG, Scottish Widows, Vitality	Aegon, Legal & General, Zurich
Life Cover with Critical Illness	AIG, Aviva (upgraded), Royal London, Scottish Widows, Vitality (comprehensive with booster)	Aegon, Aviva, LV=, Vitality (primary with booster)	Legal & General, Zurich
Mortgage Protection	Aviva, LV=, Royal London, Scottish Widows	Vitality, Zurich	Aegon, Legal & General
Mortgage Protection with Critical Illness	AIG, Aviva (upgraded), Royal London, Scottish Widows, Vitality (comprehensive with booster)	Aviva, LV=, Vitality (primary without booster), Zurich	Aegon, Legal & General
Relevant Life	AIG, Aviva, Royal London, Scottish Widows, Vitality	LV=, Zurich	Aegon, Legal & General

In addition to the overall ratings F&TRC has produced one-page fact sheets for each product and provider. These give advisers a simple resource that can be used to compare the relevant merits of each provider in each product area quickly.

This protection ratings announcement follows on from last month's launch of F&TRC's new comparison service for financial advisers, para-planners and networks who advise clients on critical illness cover. The system, which is based upon extensive research and includes the views of highly qualified and independent medical experts, allows advisers to compare CI policies based upon the quality of cover provided.

Ian McKenna, Director of F&TRC said: "Protection is often the realm of a specialist adviser in many financial planning firms. Adviser firms who don't have someone in-house dedicated to Protection will struggle to give the best and most up-to-date advice and even those who are experts may find it hard to keep up with every provider's offering in the many types of products that are available. We have designed our ratings to make sure advisers have a tool, created with metrics they have told us are important to them, to answer their Protection advice questions quickly and easily. Quality Analyser ensures advisers can give their clients fully informed and expert independent Protection advice.

"Although advisers can conduct full product analysis from our research site we also produce the one-page summaries as an additional compliance aid for advisers seeking addition independent assessment for their compliance file."

Commenting on the release of this year's ratings and fact sheets **Roy Mcloughlin, Associate Director at Cavendish Ware, said:** "F&TRC's Protection Ratings give advisers a valuable overall assessment of a provider's protection products and, when combined with their factsheets, create a simple one-page summary of the key strengths of different providers."

Adviser firms can access the full ratings and individual provider factsheets for free at www.advisersoftware.com together with F&TRC's Quality Analyser Product & Proposition comparison software.

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Notes to editors

About F&TRC

Established in 1995, the Finance & Technology Research Centre (F&TRC) is a specialist research consultancy.

The company has four key areas of activity:

- Facilitating industry collaboration in the life assurance and long term savings industries via a range of forums which bring together leading players from manufacturing, distribution and support services to identify where working together can achieve better outcomes for consumers and the industry
- Research and benchmarking through the delivery of software and ratings to help financial advisers compare the quality of financial products, available at www.advisersoftware.com
- The workplace version of Quality Analyser is based on responses to over 4,000 questions on an organisations pension proposition. No charge is made to pension providers for participating in this service
- Insight reports which focus on key strategic issues such as the future of financial advice and how organisations can enhance the quality of their services to consumers
- Bespoke consultancy on any of the above