

To Whom It May Concern,

I had taken part in the Chronic Disease Dental Scheme to help the community and provide treatment for patients who have dental problems due to ongoing medical problems with priority and in a private practice setting.

I had received no information personally from medicare regarding the scheme. I was informed about the scheme at my practice. A booklet was provided to the practice which I was not aware of until the audit. I was advised by reception that all the billing codes for medicare were entered on our system so I referred to those.

I have only had exposure to the Teen dental scheme provided by medicare. And as far as I am aware that requires no paperwork.

I have had our reception staff call up medicare several times for inquiries on codes or billing items. We have been kept on hold for extended periods of time, with conflicting responses from different medicare officers.

My practice is currently being audited. Some of the Patients that are on the audit list have been treated by me. Medicare has demanded that all the money be returned to them, on the basis that the Doctors letters were not sent out and an itemised treatment plan was not given to the patient, despite the fact that appropriate care and treatment was provided to the best of our ability.

The patients have benefited greatly by this scheme as they have received treatment at no cost to them. We have made dentures and crowns for patients who could not afford it earlier. We have charged medicare fees only so that there is no additional cost to the patient. These fees are a lot lower than our private practice fees.

Not sending out the Doctors letters and not giving the patient an itemised treatment plan has had no impact on the patients' treatment. They have received the best treatment possible at no additional cost to them.

Medicare had not offered any educational material or seminars to explain the protocol. And we have had no auditors visit our practice.

I have had a very negative experience participating in this medicare funded scheme and in future will not take part in anything funded by medicare.

Regards, Dr Gareema Prasad