

Kate Smith

CDDS Senate Inquiry

To whom it may concern,

I am a senior dental nurse at the Brunswick Family Dental Surgery. I have been working at our practice for 5 Years. At our practice a large percentage of our patients are Medicare patients which have been referred to us by GP's around Melbourne. The Medicare scheme has provided patients with chronic illness the chance to have private dentists treat them therefore improving their quality of life. A lot of the patients that present to us with a referral have severely broken down teeth, serious cases of infection and some patients are unable to eat at all, thus needing immediate dental treatment. If the dentists at our practice didn't treat them a lot of these patients would have to put on a waiting list at the dental hospital.

Our practice has been audited. Due to these audits I have seen 5 of our honest dentists fined due not to roting or any misconduct but due to clerical error.

I honestly believe that not one of the dentists were given a clear understanding of the requirements nor was there a training manual given. I have had to ring Medicare several times to clarify new requirements and on not one of these instances have I been given a clear answer, it seems even Medicare staff are not properly educated.

Our practice has been greatly affected by the Medicare Audits as we have 24+ staff working here that are not sure on what the future has in hold for them. Our practice is a friendly, welcoming and fantastic practice to attend in which all of our patients leave with a smile. The patients on the Medicare scheme are forever grateful for the work we have done for them.

I hope that the senate will consider all options when making a final announcement. It would be a shame to see dentists put a stop to helping out the public systems in the future.

Kind Regards,

Kate Smith