

Megan Mannering

To Whom It May Concern,

Regarding CDDS senate enquiry

I am the practice manager for the . At our practice we have taken on board the entire Medicare patients referred to us by the GP's in our local area, these patients are unable to fund private dental treatment due to their circumstances, The Medicare scheme has provided Patients with Chronic Illness to benefit from having private dentists treat them and improve their quality of life. In our practice we have had some very severe cases of infection, broken down teeth, Patients unable to eat solid foods and of course the embarrassment that comes along for these patients.

Our Dentists were happy to assist the Medicare Scheme and see these patients, our dentist provided exceptional work under the scheme and our patients have all been thrilled with the final result or ongoing treatment that they have received. Some Dentists have actually been out of pocket with some cases.

This disappointing aspect for me personally is that Not One of the dentists here were given a clear understanding of the requirements, nor was any staff member given a training manual to outline the Item codes nor requirements. I believe there should have been a training manual brought out at the same time as the EPC scheme. Unfortunately I personally have to contact Medicare all the time to find out what the new requirements are, as they change all the time without notice. I called Medicare last Wednesday regarding completion letters, the staff member was unable to assist me and asked me to send an email to Medicare asking a question regarding completion letters for GP's, In which a 10 day automatic response time was given as a reply to my email, Obviously going by this there is also no clear cut guidelines for the Medicare staff also.

It is to my disappointment that I have seen 5 of the most professional dentists that I have worked with in 24 years go through the trauma of being audited, then been given a debt due to a clerical error, I believe that this is truly unfair and It will affect our patients as these wonderful dentists will no longer want to treat these cases, Patients who need this program are unable to wait for the assistance of the public system and will have no option as all in the dental field will be concerned

that they will then be audited and end up with a debt with no fault of their own. The Stress that it has put on an already stressful environment is incredible.

I understand that there are guidelines for this scheme but where are the responsibilities of the governments for training the professionals in this area? Surely by the amount of Dental practices that have been audited that you can see that it is a common error across the board as most dental practices have got it wrong or misunderstood the arrangements

I have worked in Dental for 24 years and I have seen some schemes come and go, at no time in all the surgeries I have worked, In that time has a Representative from Medicare come out and clearly explained Medicare Teen Dental nor CDDS forms, Its all trial and error and depending on who you get on the other end of the phone can also be a completely different answer.

This Audit has affected our whole practice, It has 24+ staff that don't know if they will be employed in the near future due to the size of the debt, We all wish to support Dr Helen Arabatzis and her associates as speaking on behalf of all staff employed here, It is a wonderful, friendly and enjoyable practice to work in, and the only thing our dentist did wrong was to treat patients in need.

I truly hope that the senate will consider all options when making a final announcement on this, In Australia, we all look after each other with no Judgement or criticism. This will certainly affect the way our professionals in this country consider working for the public systems that is put forward in the future.

Kind Regards

Megan Mannering