

Subject: Submission re: health insurance(dental services) bill 2012(No.2)

Dear Sir/Madam

I have been involved with the CDDS scheme since early 2008. I chose to be part of the scheme even though it has lower than my usual fees to help out people with a genuine need for dental care and the scheme offered a good limit that would allow patients in need to get a real handle on their dental problems. My patients have received good and appropriate treatment for which they will have a benefit lasting well into the future and I treated them in good faith that I would be paid. I am dismayed that Medicare is auditing dentists (I have not had one yet) and seeking to recover moneys for appropriate treatment performed in good faith for minor administrative oversights. I had never dealt with Medicare before but had dealt with the Dept of Veterans Affairs (DVA) and the SA Dental Service (SADS) previously. They would usually reject claims with administrative errors on the spot so you knew where you stood. I have always had good dealings with DVA and SADS over the last 20 years or more and found them to be accommodating and thought Medicare would be similar. Medicare did provide a booklet on the scheme but it was never made clear, the severity of the punishment for any administrative errors. Indeed surely any reasonable person would do everything they could to make sure they were paid! Medicare also allowed the scheme to continue for some time knowing that there were administrative problems causing dentists a higher liability for these clerical errors. None of my patients have been adversely affected by any administrative oversight.

Virtually every dentist that has used the scheme has made the same errors so this should say something about how the scheme was introduced. Apparently Medicare has no other option but to seek to recover this money and legislation is needed to protect good dentists that have provided good treatment for the good of their patients. Therefore legislation to address this is urgent and necessary to protect these dentists' livelihood and maintain the good faith of the profession.

I have continued with the scheme for the benefit of my patients now that I understand the rules but I would have to think twice about taking part in any future government scheme.

Yours Sincerely