

## **SUBMISSION IN SUPPORT OF PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILL RE AUDITS BY MEDICARE OF DENTAL PRACTITIONERS OPERATING UNDER THE CDDS SCHEME**

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I would like to submit my support for the private members' Bill introduced into the House of Representatives on 19 March 2012 and subsequently into the Senate on 20 March 2012.

As an allied health practitioner, my uppermost goal for my patients is to maintain their overall health and wellbeing. By the introduction of the CDDS, it has enabled me to treat some patients who might otherwise have been disadvantaged with their oral health due to financial constraints.

I have continued to provide treatment for these patients in good faith according to the government guidelines issued originally and I feel that it is unjust that Medicare is now carrying out these audits, penalizing these dentists purely based on paperwork and administrative oversights and nothing to do with the quality of work provided.

Approximately 10% of my practice patient numbers are being treated at reduced fee levels under the Medicare scheme. However, I naturally maintain the same high standard of treatment for these patients, using the same materials and also dental laboratories, if required, as those used for my private patients but without reduced costs to me.

In agreeing to treat patients under the CDDS, I have also undertaken to bear the added administrative costs to my practice that are associated with processing these patients' Medicare claims and organizing the required paperwork involved with their treatment. However, I have continued to provide this service, acknowledging the health benefits for these patients.

In conclusion, I feel that the Government/Medicare need to reconsider their actions regarding the audits being carried out. Instead of imposing such harsh financial penalties on the individuals involved, maybe some re-education for the health practitioners and their staff on the required regulations of the scheme may provide a more efficient and beneficial outcome for the patients who, after all, are really everyone's primary concern.

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