



Senate Finance and Public Administration Committees
PO Box 6100,
Parliament House,
Canberra, ACT 2600,
Australia

8 April 2012

Dear Sir,

Re: Health Insurance (Dental Services) Bill 2012 [No.2]

In support of the above bill on behalf of the Australian Doctors Union I herewith provide you with a background paper outlining the problems facing dental practitioners as seen from the general practitioner perspective.

GPs know very well that the dentists were forced to do Treatment Plans **after** they received GP referral because the destitute patients could not meet the cost of preparing it out of their pockets, as the Medicare ruled out any payment to the dentists for contributing to the development of TCA Item 723 (as stipulated in the GPs Medicare Benefits Schedule book under A.30.21, page 59 – see attachment). It must be clearly understood that **GPs did not need and had no use** for the Treatment Plans **after** they completed MBS book proscribed steps in developing Treatment Care Arrangements and submitted Item 723.

The case of recent audits of dental practitioners where two thirds of them were found guilty of non-compliance in regards to this bureaucratic paperwork clearly indicates ambiguity of instructions and unwillingness to explain them by the Medicare. In fact comparison of GPs' 2007 Medicare Benefits Schedule book and the book given to the dentists in 2007 shows that they are not compatible. I have pointed out these discrepancies to Ms Kotler of the CDDS policy unit in 2007 so there is very little doubt that the Medicare knew about it for very long time yet choose not to act and help dentists to complete their paperwork correctly.

The Australian Doctors Union is not against punishment of those who "rort" the public money. We are however against all those who in government behind the smoke screen of unproven claims of widely spread "rorts" deny natural justice and procedural fairness to hard working, honest medical professionals.

I hope that the attached paper will serve as an eye-opener for you.

Yours faithfully,

For and on behalf of the Steering Committee
Of the Australian Doctors Union

Dr Richard Waluk
MD(Hons), PhD, ACCAM, JP
Secretary of ADU