

**Subject:**

Health Insurance (Dental Services) Bill 2012

Dear Sir/Medam,

Greetings, my name is Dr.Jaipal Reddy Peddy Reddy, working as Dentist in  
, i am

very great full to the federal senate for giving me the opportunity to express concerns about the actions of Medicare under the CDDS scheme.

I have started participating in the CDDS Scheme to serve the patients , who can not afford most of the basic Dental Care ,and in most of the cases ,poor oral health was effecting their general Health.and in some instances(more then 50% of patients) patients have never visited the Dentist for more then 20years, due to their Financial circumstances.

In my initial days with CDDS scheme ,there were no proper Guidelines or information available from Medicare all i could collect the information was by calling Australian dental association , it was impossible to collect the information from Medicare over the phone as most of the operators who were dealing the phone calls were new to the CDDS and not aware of the Guidelines, only From April 2011 when Australian Dental association started sending the members about actual information about the CDDS guidelines ,we came to know about the actual guidelines about the CDDS and the paper work involved.

I was involved with Medicare previously under Teen Dental Health programme and DVA (Veteran affairs Dental), where we were provided with booklets and proper guidelines, with CDDS most of my senior colleges were also not aware of the Guidelines, it was very frustrating to treat the CDDS patients initially ,the payments were rejected numerous times stating paper work is not sufficient,or patient is not eligible, even though patients presents with referral letter from his treating GP, only from past 1 year GP are aware of the actual guidelines about CDDS,there are so many occasions where full treatment provided was rejected as patients were changing the Dentists in order to get double benefit under this scheme,as there was no proper monitoring or guidelines to follow up patients previous treatment history, only from past 8 months the CDDS is computerised and when we call Medicare help line they are in a position to inform us what is the status of patients eligibility, treatment provided , thousands of doll-ors were not paid in 2010 ,2011 years , with out my fault.

still i continued my services for this scheme as i know the benefits its giving to the community , especially to people who never ever thought that their oral health can be properly addressed , more then 65% of patients under CDDS were in the public Health waiting list for more then 3 years., more then 80% cases ,the funds allotted \$4250 are not sufficient to complete the full treatment, but still i always completed the treatment with out any charges to patient as i know they can not afford any out of pocket .

The audits undertaken by Medicare is causing high stress in our profession as the paperwork requirements were not guided properly , only after April 2011 , we are getting proper information from Medicare , i request the Senate enquiry to look in to the guidelines and education provided by Medicare in 2009 and 2010 years , and to show some sympathetic approach towards the paperwork during Audits , most of my colleagues have stopped accepting CDDS patients due to fear of repayments and penalties from the Medicare Audits, whenever i hear about the stories where Dentists were forced to pay large sum of money to Medicare due to Audits , i am very very stressed about the future as you are all aware under the CDDS , the fees paid by Medicare is very low and the lab fees , materials and costs of running the practice remains same and if we are forced to repay there is no option other then closing the practice as the financial loss is unthinkable and i cannot certainly afford to pay back. just for example i will inform honourable committee members about the service we provide and the Medicare fees , For a Complete Denture Medicare pays \$714.60 , the minimum laboratory fees will be \$385 and the materiel charges will be around \$65 and needs at least 6 visits , end of the day the Dentist gets \$264 for total of 6 visits , and per average staff pay will be \$24 per hour, by providing treatment under CDDS i am actually compensating the fees from my pocket , due to Medicare audits where Medicare states that my paperwork is not satisfactory and ask me to pay back \$714 back, how can i afford,already \$600 is spent on providing the service please consider this example

Thank you for providing the opportunity, if you need any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thanking You,  
Kind Regards  
Dr.Jaipal Reddy