

02/04/2012

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

Dear Sir,

I am one of the many dentists who has been participating in the Chronic Disease Dental Scheme. (CDDS)

Prior to treating patients on this scheme I had been seeing patients from the Sacred Heart Mission. All patients from this establishment were treated at no cost. My decision to treat patients from the CDDS was to help more people in need of dental treatment.

At the commencement of this scheme no information had been available to my surgery. Initially I was bulk billing (paper copy) to Medicare. After several months I commenced billing through my Hicaps machine. It was not until I had been treating patients for over a year that much clearer guidelines were made available from Medicare. I had not participated in any other Medicare funded scheme prior to the CDDS. I have had many years involvement with the Veterans Affairs Scheme which is totally different.

Initially, most of the operational information that I received, relating to this Scheme was through the ADA. After several declined claims at the commencement of treatment for several patients, the surgery adopted a protocol to check on the eligibility of patients prior to being seen and the funds available to them.

I am currently being audited by Medicare. At this stage no-one from Medicare has attended my practice at any stage during the years that I have been participating this scheme

All of the patients under this Scheme have benefited greatly from the treatment provided to them. Many of them are still attending my practice some on new plans and some as private patients.

I would like to add that this whole experience has impacted on me greatly, and my willingness to participate in any Medicare funded program has been compromised. This is because Medicare's actions in seeking recovery of claimed benefits notwithstanding that the treatments were performed, the patients outcomes were not compromised and only because the dentists were unaware of the paperwork requirements.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr Scott Jenkins