

Dr Brett H Stewart



SENATE COMMITTEE REVIEW OF CDDS

I commenced participation in this program in late 2007. The locality in which I practice has a significant number of elderly and unemployed persons. I elected to Bulk Bill all clients because these people rarely get a break in life, not only are they poor they also have medical issues.

The practice has provided comprehensive dental treatment for 1016 patients under the program of whom approximately 228 were existing clients of the practice.

This scheme has given many people there first and only opportunity to attain a level of oral health that only more wealthy individuals have enjoyed and I feel very satisfied that I have been able to provide this service to less fortunate individuals within our community. Indeed many of these clients have expressed how much they appreciate the treatment they have received through the scheme.

The biggest problem was the workload and waiting times many days were totally consumed by work on the program. The paper work compliance put huge strain on my staff, and it is just not possible for me to oversee every aspect of these duties, I have to rely on the staff and this worries me.

In October 2011 I receive a preliminary audit notification; I am yet to hear the outcome. I was alarmed to read about the treatment of other dentists by Medicare. To face bankruptcy, to lose your life's work over paper compliance through this scheme has caused me more stress than anything in my entire life.

I elected to cease to participate in CDDS on 1 January 2012; I completed all outstanding treatment plans on 31 March 2012. This was the only way I could rid myself of some of the stress Medicare has caused me. I still have a dark cloud hanging over my head and pray daily about a positive outcome.

Yours sincerely

Brett H Stewart