

Subject: FW: fpa.sen@aph.gov.au

Senate Finance and Public Administration Committees,

Dear Sir/Madam,

I would like to relate my experiences with the EPC/CDDS Scheme.

I first became aware of the scheme in 2008 when patients began arriving with documentation from their medical practitioner For the scheme. Initially we

did not accept work under the scheme but as more and more patients presented seeking treatment Under the scheme, we began participation. These were patients who were often in acute pain and had no other means of having Their dental needs met.

Information about the scheme was not forthcoming from Medicare and I received information from a local medical practitioner, other dentists and ADA publications.

From the outset, our primary reason for participating in the scheme has been to treat patients in good faith realising that without the scheme the majority of these patients would be on government waiting lists or, worse still, very often having no way of receiving treatment for painful and complex dental conditions.

Having treated and relieved the suffering of literally hundreds of patients, in late 2011 I received a letter from Medicare informing me that I will be the subject of an audit. The reasons for the audit were never explained to me and to this day I have not heard from Medicare to keep me updated on the results of the audit.

My staff and myself spend an enormous amount of time on paperwork related to the scheme. My receptionist spends a great deal of time on the phone to Medicare operators trying to clarify certain situations. The information given to her by these operators is often contradictory and vague. In view of the fact that we are the subject of an audit as a result of which, theoretically, Medicare can demand the return of ALL fees paid to me if even a slight administrative error is done by myself or any of my many staff, is a terrifying and stressful situation that we experience on a daily basis.

We feel we are performing an enormous public service and we have improved the quality of life of hundreds of otherwise helpless individuals. To have have our livelihood and peace of mind threatened because of some obscure Medicare fineprint seems manifestly unfair and absolutely un-Australian.

I congratulate Senator Di Natale on his bill and hope our Senate will indeed rectify this situation and prevent the obvious witchhunt being undertaken by Medicare.

Yours faithfully,

Dr Joe Saad.