

Subject:

EPC scheme

1. Our practice has always participated in any government scheme that is there to help the more needy of our community. We ourselves see patients we do for free. Certain charity organisations send patients to us who have shown that they are getting their lives together eg ex drug users. And their smile inhibits them getting a job for whatever reason. Our practice is a more high end practice and we are not a health fund provider. We have always seen Veterans affairs patients.
2. In the beginning we received no information on the EPC scheme. As information was released we did exactly what we were told were the requirements. We do not do EPC to help the profit margins of our practice. We do it as a part of the community effort of the dental profession. So we have no reason to not follow what we were told. But this information was changing constantly. We would have meetings in our practice to make sure that everybody was up to date with the latest requirements. It got to the points where the practitioners wanted to stop being involved.
3. For 25 years every scheme that the government introduced we have been a part of. Even when the fees paid to our practice made it not profitable. So that means that our normal patients were sponsoring it.
4. The majority of the patients that we have seen on the scheme have been patients who have been delaying dentistry as they couldn't afford it. The scheme was certainly a help but I think it could have been better targeted. That is why we use charity groups to find genuine patients in hardship. The patients that come from the government schemes sometimes seem to be the ones who know the system
5. I lecture all around Australia and have met dentists who have been audited. All of them have been for a lack of paper work. One of the ladies from Tasmania is the most decent, caring people that you could have met. Her story is shameful as to how she was treated. She was doing the work to help people but she became a political pawn
6. I have been very vocal in the dental community to make sure that dentists are not so ignorant next time the government wants help with community work. The government can go and spend millions opening up their own clinics. Private practices have spent many years accumulating equipment to offer excellent dentistry. To do this from scratch would be not affordable for a government. Other governments have used dentists and their equipment in good faith and the majority of dentists have helped. This government has treated the profession very badly and I think all dentists have seen what a government can do with no care at all for the profession.
7. Dentists who steal and make false claims should not be protected by anybody and should be made to pay back the money. Also the doctors who are giving the EPC forms for no reason. They are in fact the leader of the scheme.
8. I am tax payer as well and hate to see waste. Be careful with how you implement public dentistry as it have failed in many countries including England where they have the worst mouths in the world. And other European countries are cutting back on their schemes. I have no issue with a basic public system but keep it to the prevention side of dentistry. And also in other schemes people came with Health care cards and drove out in their BMWs. So keep it targeted if you can.
9. I lecture all around the world and would love to give you my experiences to help a good system is put in place in the first place. The Greens scheme will fail and cost way too much. We are regarded as one of the best dentists in the world. Don't ruin that reputation.

Yours Faithfully Dr. Agim Hymer

