



**THE HON NICOLA ROXON MP
MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND AGEING**

Mrs Julia Irwin MP
Chair
Standing Committee on Petitions
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mrs Irwin *Julia*

Thank you for your letter of 27 May 2008 enclosing a petition in relation to the re-establishment of the Commonwealth Dental Health Scheme and Commonwealth funding for dental care.

The Commonwealth and the State and Territory Governments are working together to improve the standard of oral health in Australia.

I am pleased to be able to advise you that the Commonwealth Government will be re-introducing this scheme as the Commonwealth Dental Health Program from July 2008. Through this Program, the Commonwealth will provide funding to assist the States and Territories to deliver public dental services in their jurisdictions and help to clear the backlog of people waiting for public dental treatment. The Commonwealth Government will fund up to one million additional public dental consultations by providing \$290 million over three years to the States and Territories. The increased funding for public dental care under the Commonwealth Dental Health Program will assist eligible patients to access timely dental care.

This is part of a significant Commonwealth Government commitment to dental health with a total of \$780 million over five years for dental services. This includes \$290 million for the Commonwealth Dental Health Program and \$490 million for the Medicare Teen Dental Plan.

On 2 March 2008, this Government announced that it will also deliver its election commitment to introduce a new Medicare Teen Dental Plan. This program will provide up to \$150 per person towards an annual preventative check. Around 1.1 million teenagers 12-17 years of age in families receiving Family Tax Benefit Part A, and teenagers in the same age group receiving Youth Allowance or Abstudy, will be eligible under the Medicare Teen Dental Plan. The program is expected to commence on 1 July 2008, subject to the passage of legislation.

I trust that the above information is of use.

Yours sincerely

NICOLA ROXON

24 JUN 2008