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Submission No. 137
AUTHORISED: 20/7/06
KS

STANDING COMMITTEE
18 JUL 2006
ON HEALTH AND AGEING

ADDENDUM TO HEALTH FUNDING COMMITTEE REPORT

In hindsight I consider it to be appropriate for me to convey to the Committee items for the Committee to evaluate in their deliberations.

1. There has been some press statements made about the Government's desire for the Doctors to reduce the gap fees. In my opinion and from information received from the AMA, Medicare Schedule rates have not kept pace with inflation or the improved techniques used to prolong life. In some cases there is no Schedule Fee for some medical procedures now used generally for the benefit of patient care. This view is not shared by Mr. Christopher Pyne MP when he indicated to me in writing that the Government considers the Schedule Fees reasonable.

2. If my memory serves me correctly, about 4 years ago the AMA was asking the Federal Government to release more Provider Nos. within the medical profession for the creation of more practicing positions for Doctors. The Federal Government apparently had rejected this request, which as predicted by the AMA has caused a Doctor shortage.

3. I wish to make it quite clear I have no problem with a doctor charging the fee recommended by the AMA, it would be useless being a member of the AMA and not charging the fees recommended.

4. In my opinion the health system would be better served if all patients paid 10% of of the schedule fee rate when visiting a health professional, this I believe would contain health costs. If a doctor charges the AMA fees, a person paying private health insurance should not be out of pocket by no more than 10% of the fee charged.

5. In writing this addendum I have attempted to forward the inadequacies of the Health system as I see it. I may be naïve but when I went to school I was taught Citizens pay taxes so government can provide the essential services for an improved lifestyle and care of the population. At present I see no benefit in having a massive surplus of funds when the population is being deprived of decent services.

[redacted]

Yours truly,

Duncan Brown

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