

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

**Supplementary Budget Estimates 2013-14, 20 November 2013**

**Question:** E13-124

**OUTCOME:** 3 - Access to Medical Services

**Topic:** Child Dental Benefits Schedule

**Type of Question:** Hansard Page 82, 20 November 2013

**Senator:** Di Natale

**Question:**

There are some new item numbers that are not consistent with the schedule of dental services – for example, fissure and/or tooth surface sealing per tooth – and the limitations that you mentioned earlier that have been informed by what the department believes is appropriate practice. But that is different to how dental practitioners currently bill.

**Answer:**

Private dentists will still be able to provide services and bill their patients as they choose, but benefits under the Child Dental Benefits Schedule (CDBS) will only be paid for services that comply with the requirements of the program.

The Department of Health has drawn on clinical advice and precedents from other Commonwealth dental programs in developing the CDBS schedule. Items in the CDBS use the item descriptors from the Australian Dental Association's (ADA) Australian Schedule of Dental Services and Glossary 10th Edition with few differences. As the CDBS is a reimbursement schedule (whereas the ADA Schedule is a list of service descriptors only), it includes restrictions and limitations on items to ensure appropriate use of government funding. The item number for fissure sealing (88162) allows payment of a reduced benefit for the fourth and subsequent fissure seals provided on a given day.