

First Impressions

ISSUE 15
OCTOBER 2008

The News in Brief

MEDICARE DENTAL ITEMS FOR PATIENTS WITH CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND COMPLEX CARE NEEDS

The Medicare scheme providing dental care to patients with chronic conditions and complex care needs remains open at present and eligible claims will be paid.

The Senate voted on 16 September 2008 to prevent the closure of the scheme.

It remains the Government's intention to close the scheme in order to make funding available for its dental programs, and the Government will continue to negotiate with the Senate in an effort to achieve this.

Dental Prosthetists will be advised if and when the Senate agrees to the closure of the scheme.

If dental providers or patients are uncertain about whether a claim will be paid, they can call Medicare Australia on the day of the appointment to check whether the scheme is still operating.

The Medicare Australia number for patients is 132 011, and for providers 132 150

Please Note: The ADPAQ sent many letters to members of the Senate requesting that they look closely at the benefits available to the public prior to choosing to close the scheme and follow the wishes of the government. We would like to thank all those members who sent letters and emails and congratulate them on the outcome.

FOR YOUR DIARY

**October
2nd**

ADPAQ Information Night
Duncan DuBuisson

“Prosthetic Solutions for the Edentulous Patient using Implants.”

United Services Club, Brisbane

**November
14th**

Griffith Alumni present
Dr Raj Nair and
Professor Newell Johnson
“Common Diseases/Disorders of the mucous membranes of the mouth”
Gold Coast

**December
6th**

**ADPAQ AGM
Election Year
Clinic Afternoon**
**Tour of new Teaching
facilities at Southbank
Institute of Technology**
**Christmas Dinner
Rydges Southbank**

August 2009

**20th Biennial ADPA
Conference**
**Grand Chancellor
Hobart Tasmania**

BE A DEVIL - COME ON DOWN

October 2009

**6th World Symposium on
Denturism**
**The Orleans Hotel
Las Vegas, Nevada**



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MEDIA RELEASES

From: Senator Rachel Siewert, Senator for Western Australia

On Behalf of: Australian Greens

Tuesday 16th September 2008

Greens hold out for comprehensive dental plan

The Australian Greens today voted to continue the Medicare dental scheme for the chronically ill, after the Government failed to fix obvious gaps in their planned rollout of the proposed Commonwealth Dental Health Program (CDHP).

"The Medicare dental scheme has helped thousands of Australians suffering from chronic health problems directly related to dental problems since it was improved in November 2007," said Australian Greens Senator Rachel Siewert.

"The Government claims it is essential to close down the chronic disease dental scheme and redirect funds to the CDHP – a program that will not be operational for months to come."

"The Greens won't support half-measures that will see some low-income earners with urgent dental problems losing vital services," said Senator Siewert.

"The Government has been unable to assure us that people currently receiving treatment will receive the same level of dental health care under the CDHP. It is sheer hypocrisy for them to cry poor about being unable to fund both these programs... particularly in light of the \$31 billion of tax cuts that have left these people behind."

"If the Government is serious about helping low income earners with serious dental problems, they would maintain both of these programs. The reasons behind this move have nothing to do with addressing the pressing needs of low income earners for chronic dental care and everything to do with minimising Commonwealth expenditure."

"It's quite clear that the Government needs to go back to the drawing board. When they can present to the Senate a comprehensive Commonwealth Dental Scheme that meets the needs of low income earners, perhaps we will be able to move forward and create a truly comprehensive dental support system," she concluded.

From: Dr Geoffrey Bird, Executive Director

On Behalf of: Council on the Ageing Over 50's

Wednesday 17th September 2008

Dental health reform needs bite not bickering

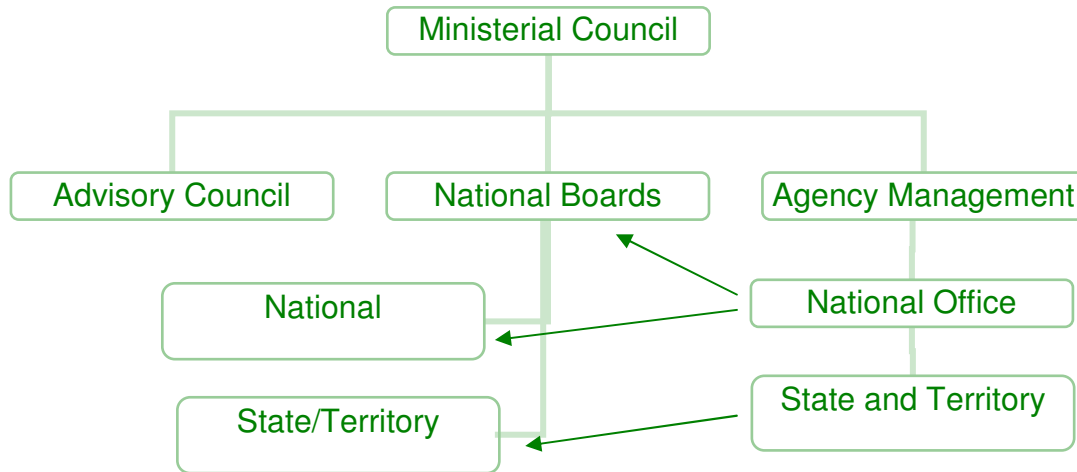
The Council of the Ageing has long called for improvements in dental and oral health care. The current spat over Medicare benefits for chronically ill patients suffering dental disease must not be allowed to distract the government from delivering much-needed improvements to the availability of dental services to all Australians.

"For older Australians, dental health is a fundamental element of wellbeing. Sadly, many are suffering unnecessary pain and deteriorating oral health not only because of a shortage of dentists, but because of unhelpful professional arrangements about how dental hygienists and therapists can offer oral health services," said Executive Director, Dr Geoffrey Bird.

"Clearly people who are chronically ill and have associated dental disease should have ready and regular access to treatment. So too should pensioners, and there are far too many of them on dental waiting lists. Some of them have been waiting for ten years.

National Registration Update

THE NEW SCHEME



Health Ministers Outline Consultations Arrangements

In announcing the consultation arrangements at a national forum convened in Canberra on 4 September 2008, Ministers noted that the national forum, and forums in each State and Territory being held in August and September, are just the beginning of the process of consultation and engagement.

Ministers will use as their guiding principles in developing the legislation and the scheme that the safety of the public is paramount, that high quality health care must be protected and advanced and that governments should be accountable and processes transparent. The implementation arrangements and the new scheme itself are designed to ensure consultation on key matters.

To implement the scheme, national legislation will be introduced in the Queensland Parliament in two stages. The first stage will cover the provisions of the COAG Agreement and will be introduced in the Queensland Parliament in October 2008.

The second stage, to be introduced in the Queensland Parliament in August 2009, will cover matters where further work and discussion is required beyond the terms of the COAG Agreement. These include: details of registration and accreditation arrangements, complaints and enforcement arrangements, and privacy and information sharing arrangements, as well as other matters.

To ensure full engagement of the existing State and Territory boards in the ten professions to be covered by the new scheme on 1 July 2010, a national Registration Reference Group has been set up to provide advice. There will also be a Transition Coordination Group in each State and Territory, comprising all the ten boards and the local health department. A transition coordinator will be funded by governments in each State and Territory to assist the process of planning for the transition.

Ministers also noted that the website www.nhwt.gov.au/natreg.asp will carry all policy papers as they are issued as well as calls for submissions and information sheets on the new scheme and the implementation process.

Canberra 4 September 2008



Australian Health Ministers' Conference
MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Denture Care Professionals

The Back Teeth

UPDATES



RSL News ADVERTISING

Our Advertising in the Winter Edition of the RSL news publication has sparked some interest from members of the public.

We hope the half page ad, on page 19, helps the public understand that Dental Prosthetists offer a professional Health Care service direct to the public.

This is just the first step in a Marketing Strategy that we hope to establish fully in 2009, please note that the Marketing Committee would be grateful of any statistics re referrals from the ad....see 'from the desk of the treasurer'.

2008 NZIDT Annual Conference - Christchurch Friday 10th & Saturday 11th October 2008

Due to a recent flurry of communications we have been informed of the New Zealand Institute of Dental Technologists Annual Conference. Unfortunately this is VERY late notice but due to an agreement to have reciprocal rights for Members on both sides of the Tasman we will keep you updated with their Continual Professional Development program.

To keep updated yourself go to www.nzidt.org.nz

FROM THE DESK OF THE TREASURER

RSL News Advertising

The ADPAQ are hoping to set in motion a strategy to establish Dental Prosthetists, DP's, as the provider of choice where Denture services to the public are concerned.

As you can imagine this advertising is not inexpensive and so to have an idea of whether this advertising results in additional clients to your practice and that the ADPAQ is spending your member fee wisely; It would be great if in the next few months you keep a tally of the number of clients that come to you after seeing the advert.

Please keep brief note of;
Date of Service
Type of Service

In December you will be asked to fax these details to the Treasurer.



The Griffith Alumni of Dentistry and Oral Health have formally invited members of the Australian Dental Prosthetists Association Queensland to become 'Friends of the Alumni'. Members of the ADPAQ will have the opportunity to benefit from continuing education that will be offered at Griffith University throughout the year.

To initiate this historic association the Alumni has invited members to attend a lecture evening, see the enclosed flyer, hosted by the Alumni.