

15 October 2023

Senator Jordon Steele-John

Chair Senate Select Committee Inquiry into Access to and Provision of Dental Services

via email: dental.services.sen@aph.gov.au

Open letter: Australians need a Chief Oral Health Officer

Dear Senator Steele-John,

We have welcomed the significant issues that have been identified in the interim report on access to and provision of dental services.

It has once again shone a light on what we have known for decades – the mouth has been left out of the body!

We thank you and all members of the Senate Select Committee for listening to members of the oral health profession and everyday Australians who have painted the picture of the current woeful status and barriers to access of oral health services.

The time for change is now!

We urge the Australian Government to make a start that will have a significant impact. We understand that Universal Dental Care may be currently out of reach. But don't let this inquiry be just one more piece of evidence that gets put in the too hard basket.

We need a roadmap to incrementally work towards improved access to oral health services and this needs to be driven by a Chief Oral Health Officer who can take a seat at the 'health table' and put the mouth back into the body.

Please help all people in Australia to access the oral health services they require. Let's make a start now so all people in Australia have a chance to smile!

On behalf of ADIA and all the organisations included on the following pages.

Yours faithfully

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