

Dear Sirs/Madams

I would like to make the following comments with regard to the Senate Enquiry into the Mental Health Care provisions:

I am a registered psychologist in private practice and most of my clients are under a Mental Health Care Plan, referred by their GPs. I have a number of clients who require 18 sessions per calendar year who will be significantly disadvantaged if they only have access to 10 sessions. 18 sessions means that they can be seen approximately every three weeks during the year and 10 means that they can only be seen less than once a month, which is inadequate. Most of my longer term clients are bulk billed and cannot afford to fund their own mental health care. I am really worried about their mental health under the new provisions.

With regard to the "two tiered system" of psychologists, one of my major concerns is that as the funding is done on a percentage basis, the gap between registered psychologists and clinical psychologists is becoming bigger and bigger.

Thank you for your attention

Val Sutton