

11/7/11

To: Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee

From: Jeffrey L. Edmonds, Psy.D.

Re: Pending adjustment of Medicare rebates for psychologists

Members of the Committee:

I have recently learned that the committee is considering equalizing Medicare rebate rates for psychologists, regardless of their levels of education and training. While I understand this could save money for the Commonwealth, the ramifications are potentially serious. In short, those with four-year degrees are not trained as intensively or long enough to handle the complex problems that one with a doctorate has been trained for. With advance training and experience, should come commensurate remuneration. If Australia moves to a system that removes the incentives to pursue graduate education beyond a four year degree, it will place the mental health of the public in jeopardy by requiring those with less training and experience to handle complex cases, and will place Australia on tier below that of other countries, such as the U.K., Canada, and America in terms of education and delivery of service. In lieu of this, I hope that the committee continues the current pay structure as it is, which will better ensure the delivery of mental health care in this country. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey L. Edmonds, Psy.D.  
Clinical Psychologist