

3rd August 2011

To: the Senate Inquiry into Commonwealth Funding of Mental Health Service

As a counselling psychologist and a teacher of counselling working in Australia and overseas; and having worked as a counselor for eight years in community psychiatric services and for fifteen years in independent practice, I would like to recommend that consideration be given to:

The changes in the number of services provided by counselling psychologist.

I recommend maintaining the current system of Medicare funded sessions. A number of the clients I work with are living with long term mental illnesses: a long term counselling relationship is needed.

The two tiered system of payments.

I believe that counselling psychologists should be paid an amount of Medicare rebate for counseling services equal to that paid to a clinical psychologist.