

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

08 August 2011

Dear Secretary,

I am writing in response to the proposed changes to the Medicare rebate scheme. I am concerned that people in the community will be adversely affected by a reduction of sessions to no more than 10 per calendar year. I have looked at the records of clients seen in the practice that I work at and have observed that a considerable proportion of them (roughly 15%) required sessions in excess of current 12 (to 18) required. Given that the district I work in falls within a low socio-economic corridor of south-east Queensland, several of the clients that access the service would be greatly disadvantaged with session reduction; namely as they would be unable to fund the additional support they require to assist them in reaching psychological well-being. In addition, there are a limited number of other services available that our clientele. This raises issues about the continuity of care that can be provided, especially with clients who are deemed not severe enough to access support from other services. The Medicare rebate system has many strengths and has benefitted the community in many ways, however, being more stringent with session allocations will create further problems for the mental health sector.

Concerned Psychologist