

Community Affairs, Committee (SEN)

Review of two tier Medicare rebates for Clinical Psychologists and other issue

To whom it may concern

I am a self employed Clinical Psychologist on the Gold Coast /Queensland. I have a small practice where I consult with about 20-22 clients per week. Most of my clients are referred to me by some local GP's. I bulk -bill over 80% of my clients. My practice is in the Burleigh Heads/Miami area where there is a growing need for the services Clinical Psychologists can offer. My clients in general CANNOT afford a GAP! and most will not come if I was to charge a GAP. I believe we as a nation have a responsibility for the psychological and emotional well-being of our citizens. The outcomes of our work have seen individuals overcome anxiety/depression and trauma (for example) so they can return to the workplace and be productive and TAX-Paying citizens. I strongly oppose the reduction of the Medicare rebate to Clinical Psychologists.

On a personal note: I returned to University following the financial upheaval in the 1990's when I was retrenched. I studied for three years full time; seven years part-time and then undertook supervision for a further forty weeks to get fully accredited into the College of Clinical Psychologists. My aim was to work to well into my sixties (health permitting) which in itself is reducing the burden of the Australian taxpayer. If the Medicare rebate is reduced, this will impact on my ability to earn an income, thus INCREASING the burden of the Australian taxpayer.

Mental Health awareness is just growing and we need incentives to bring in more people equipped to handle issues around this.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any queries.

Brendan Evans